

THE
EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS
OF CHILDHOOD

By the Same Author :

EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD

THE YOUNG CHILD AND HIS PARENTS

(First published in Australia as YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN)

TALKS TO PARENTS

THE EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS OF CHILDHOOD

A BOOK FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

by

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With a Foreword by
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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS LTD.
WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.4

FIRST PRINTED
SECOND EDITION



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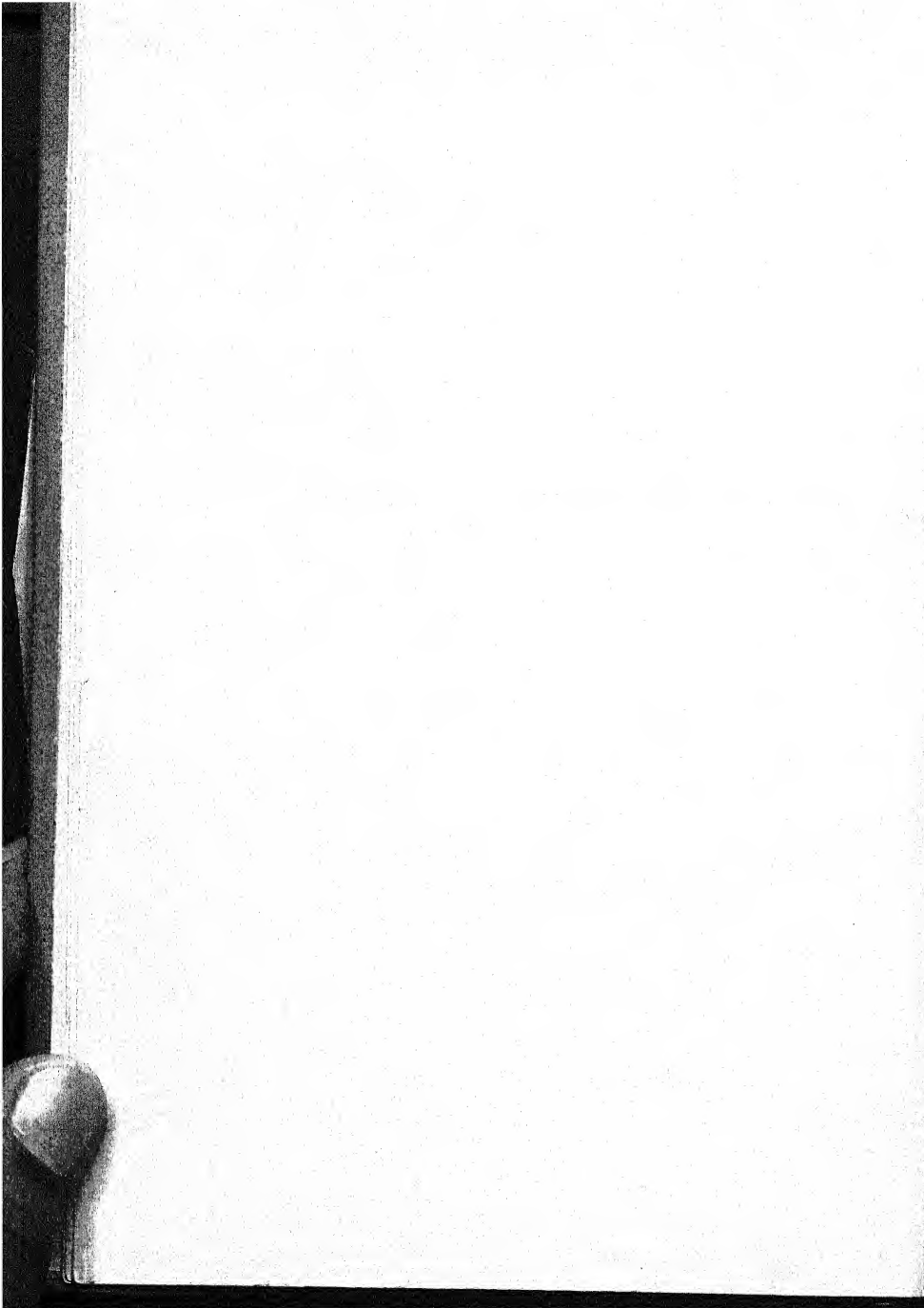
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c/o B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 122, East 55th Street, NEW YORK.

FOREWORD

THIS is a further instalment of Miss Benjamin's treatment of the problem of training the child. The earlier publication emphasised general principles, particularly in relation to the forming of the basic habits of the young child. Here the author goes into great detail in dealing with the numerous problem-situations that can arise for parents and others with children of all ages. An account of the causes of the child's behaviour is given in every case, as is also a discussion of the method of handling each problem of behaviour. Both the explanation of the behaviour and the treatment necessary are presented from ripe knowledge and with marked competence.

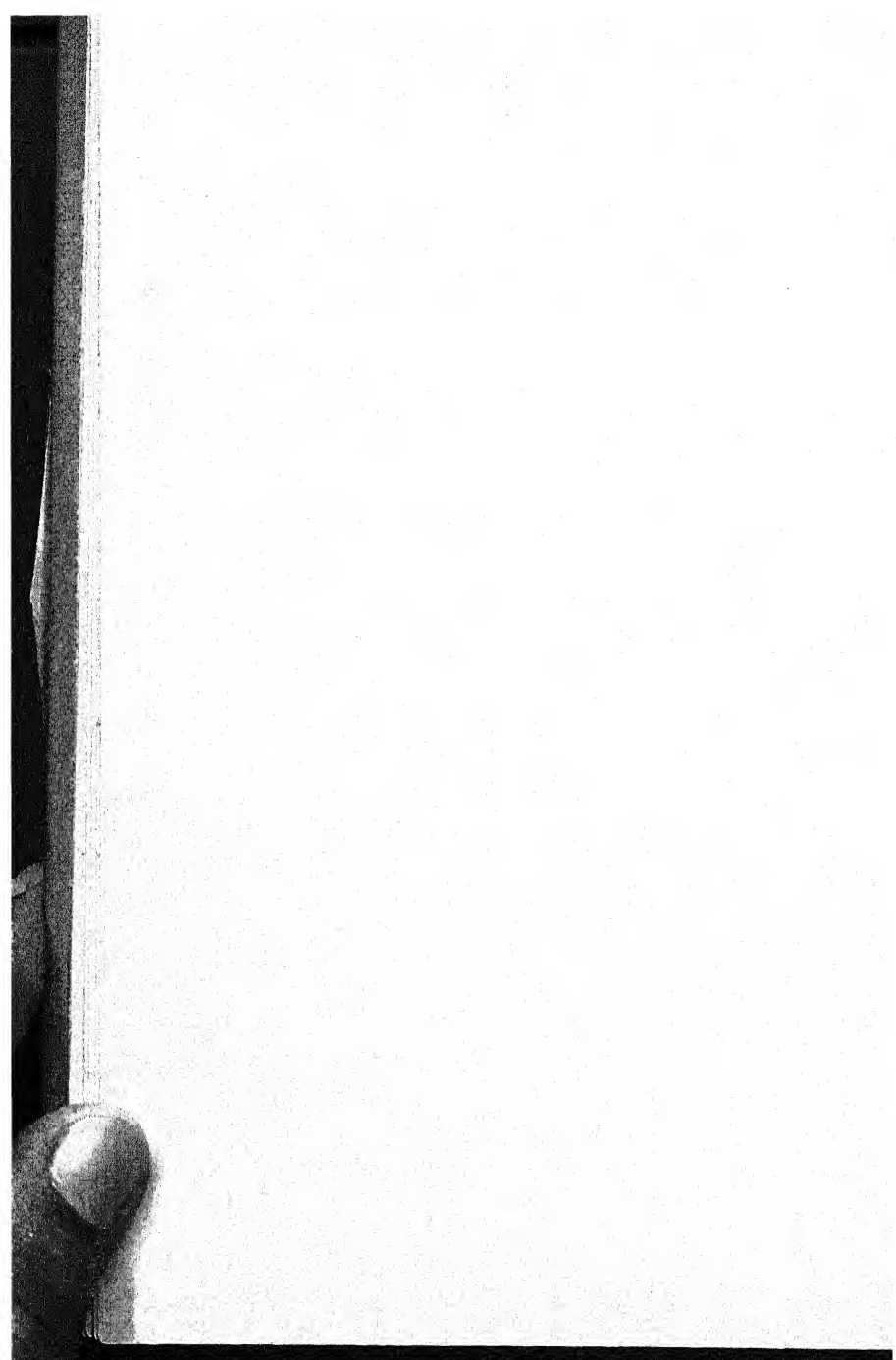
I should like to commend strongly to all charged with the bringing up of children this comprehensive compendium of the problems likely to arise for them. I do so, however, with the much-needed reminder to the anxious ones (of whom there are too many) that no child ever presents all of the problems, while many children, given sufficient space of their own and playmates, may be left healthily to solve their own problems.

H. TASMAN LOVELL,
Emeritus Professor, University of Sydney.



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INTRODUCTION

It is not necessary for you to read this introduction unless you wish. I have written it because I feel that I should state clearly what seem to me the ultimate aims of education, in order that you may understand the fundamental principles which alone can give life and meaning to any practical suggestions for child guidance. Unless we have a clear understanding of these principles, it is impossible for us to make a coherent and related whole of a child's upbringing. We would be working without direction, and would have no standard by which to judge whether the child's attitudes, impulses and activities should be encouraged or directed into more desirable ways.

Education should guide the child towards two main goals; first towards the development of his natural powers, and secondly towards an awareness of his responsibility towards the community as a whole. These two purposes may seem to be in conflict with one another (and to some extent they are), but a reconciliation can and should be made.

Every child is born with certain tendencies, has certain innate powers and possibilities, some strong, some weak. These, in their relative strengths and weaknesses, form the weft of his future personality, and from them will come the contribution he must inevitably give to life. This contribution may be good or bad. Which it is will be largely determined by the guidance he receives from those about him during the plastic years of his childhood and youth.

As an individual he must be respected. He must be given the opportunity for self-realisation and self-expression. If this is not done at all stages of his development, he will suffer from a sense of frustration, of which he will be more or less conscious all his life. The frustrations from which men suffer

can be many and varied. Life can be made so unsatisfying that men must seek avenues of compensation or escape. These may lead to achievements of great worth; but too often they lead to follies and futilities, to vice or cruelty, or to an insatiable greed for power, position or wealth. On the other hand, the sense of frustration may lead to a more or less complete withdrawal from life and to a preoccupation with unrealities, hallucinations or dreams.

If, however, we concern ourselves with the child only as an individual and do not consider him also a member of a community, whether it be the small community of the home or the larger community outside, we shall give him only a one-sided development. All his life he will live among men; we must decide what his relationship with them should be. Shall we teach him that he and his desires are the only things that matter? That what he wishes must be done, no matter how this may affect the happiness or unhappiness of others? Or should we teach him to realise more and more clearly as he grows older that what he does should never be judged solely as an individual act, but also as an act that must in some way affect the lives of others? The child's future social or anti-social attitude is primarily determined by the character of the home, by the family relationships and by the willingness with which the parents undertake, not only family responsibilities, but share also in the responsibilities of the community at large.

For his education to be complete, the child must not only be led to self-realisation, to the control of natural primitive impulses for the good of the whole, but he should learn also, both at home and at school, that physical well-being and material possessions are not the whole of life; they are essential only as a basis for it. He should learn that the creations of man's mind and spirit are also of importance; that they are, in fact, the source of some of man's deepest satisfactions. He should therefore be given the opportunity to know and love the beautiful things of life. Nature, the

world of books, of music, of science and art, both of his own nation and that of others, should be opened to him, so that he may have throughout his life a source of mental and spiritual refreshment. Most people today recognise the importance of giving the child a healthy body and of providing him with all those things that give him the foundations of physical health. They do not, however, realise with anything like the same clarity that it is equally important for him to have those things that lead to mental health. It is my hope that the following chapters may help you to understand how the principles that should underlie education from the earliest days may be applied to the problems that arise in the home and in the everyday life of a normal child.

ZOË BENJAMIN.

SYDNEY, 1947.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My sincere thanks are due to Dr. W. G. K. Duncan Director of the Tutorial Department, University of Sydney, who has permitted me to use material largely incorporated in lectures written by me for the University Discussion Group Scheme; and to Miss Gladys Marks, B.A., for her interest and help in editing this manuscript.

ZOË BENJAMIN.

NOTE

Throughout this work Miss Zoë Benjamin refers to her previous book *The Young Child and His Parents*, the title of which in Australia—where the book was first published—is *You and Your Children*.

CHAPTER I

CITIZENS OF THE FUTURE

EDUCATION AS DEVELOPMENT

DURING this century there has been a great growth in men's consciousness of the importance of education and its relation to life as a whole. For centuries man has been regarded as mainly "a learning animal," and education has consisted primarily of learning facts. Education is, however, more than this. It should embrace the whole of man's development—physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual—so that he may realise all his innate powers and possibilities, that may be of value to himself and to the community as a whole. The man who is truly educated is not just a learned man, but a man of a poised and balanced personality. This idea has completely altered the concept of modern educators towards the child, whatever his age. They realise that the habits of thought, feeling and action, which he is forming from the first weeks of life and throughout childhood and youth, are as much a part of his education as the subjects he learns at school.

The home and the school are equally responsible for determining the kind of man or woman the child will be. They share equally in his education, which will decide whether he finds some measure of self-realisation and develops the power to adjust himself to the demands of life. From this point of view, it is education that determines also whether the child becomes an adult with a sense of social responsibility towards the community in which he lives, or, lacking moral standards, makes the most of every opportunity for self-aggrandisement and the acquiring of material possessions no matter what the cost to others.

Even though education has been regarded as the process by which the child gains knowledge and accumulates facts, when school years have passed how many of these facts have been retained? How much do we remember of the pages and pages of text-books we had to learn? And how many have carried through life a love for any of the subjects they were taught, so that when school days were over they continued them because of love and interest?

Again, can the average person point to any very definite growth in the knowledge of his abilities gained at school? How far has he been taught to think for himself? Has he been encouraged to ask questions, to recognise problems, to discuss interesting topics of the day? Has not the average child been trained to listen docilely to a teacher, to accept the teacher's ideas and point of view without question, and to give these back in periodical examinations? We complain a great deal about the muddled thought and inefficiency of much of our public life. What else can we expect when the average school or home does little or nothing to encourage mental alertness, individual thought and intelligent reasoning? Unless children are encouraged in the home and in the school to think for themselves, to solve the problems they meet, and to use their knowledge to make life more interesting and worth-while, how can we expect them, as men and women, to possess these qualities when they have had little or no previous training in their use and development?

If little knowledge of facts has been retained, and if few or no interests and little power of individual thought have been developed, and if there has been little development of any abilities save those involved in book-learning, what was the use of the hundreds of hours spent at school? It has been to a great extent waste—waste of precious hours that could have awakened children to the fascination of the varied knowledge they could gain from books; waste of opportunities for opening up avenues of interesting occupation in which book-knowledge would help; waste of the

child's natural desire to be doing things with his hands, and of his innate love of art, music and rhythmic movement which could be directed and guided so that he develops a taste for something better than "the pictures" and "swing"; waste of normal curiosity which asks questions and can be led to an intelligent understanding of the world about him, as well as of the products of the activities of men. But most of all it has been waste of the creative spirit possessed in some degree by all normal children, and which too often dies during school days through lack of encouragement in both school and home. Is this not a grave reflection upon the school in particular, that man's most precious spiritual possessions which have been responsible for all human achievement—viz. intellectual curiosity, the creative impulse, the love of things of spiritual worth—have survived *in spite of*, and not because of, the education given in the schools?

Again, education should develop in the child the right *social attitudes*, but these are mostly gained outside the schoolroom, in the playground. The social side of man's nature needs guidance and training as much as does his intelligence, but it gets this only in a modified degree in the average school where the teacher commands and the child obeys, and where free co-operation between children in the schoolroom is discouraged. The co-operation between leaders and followers, the intelligent understanding of social and moral problems that comes only from free discussion about actual occurrences, as well as about those in their books, exists very rarely between teacher and pupil, so that the child as a rule *submits* (or does not submit) to the authority of the teacher, but has no training in the democratic principle of helping to formulate laws. In schools where there is self-government under the wise guidance of a democratically minded teacher, the intelligent respect shown by the children for law (much of which has been established by their own will) is most interesting. They form their own

committees for various duties, and the teacher guides only when necessary. The children get, in this way, practical elementary training in citizenship.

When it is considered a crime for one child to help another in his schoolwork and when prizes and position in class are regarded as the criterion of success and individual worth, it is not very surprising that selfishness and desire for material success characterise so great a part of our social and economic life, and even of the professions that are supposed to be inspired by the highest ideals of social service. When children learn because they are interested, because they realise the value of their work, outside and material incentives need not be used: but so long as these forms of compulsion are needed, education cannot but continue to emphasise the overwhelming importance of material and concrete rewards as ultimate aims, rather than the development of character.

CONTINUITY OF DEVELOPMENT

If education aims at the complete development of the child, what should it demand? It demands that every child in the community be given full opportunity for attaining his highest development at every stage of growth, since education is a continuous process. Even the best school cannot do everything possible for the child if his home has not already given him the right start. This means that every child should have the heritage of healthy parents; he should be born into a home that gives him the cleanliness, the fresh air and sunshine, the food and care that infancy and childhood need. The clinics help the mother at the period when the physical needs of the child are of paramount importance. But even at this age parents should have some understanding of child management so that the child's personality is not warped at the root.

Then when infancy passes, the nursery school has a most important part to play—and some day we hope that nursery schools and kindergartens *run on correct lines with properly*

trained nursery-school teachers will be available for every child in the community, rich or poor. Only in very recent years has anything scientific been learnt about the physical, mental and emotional needs of the pre-school child, and so it is not yet generally realised how important it is that he should have the care of properly trained people (mothers included) if he is to attain the fullest development of *body and mind*, and is to avoid those emotional disturbances that lead to behaviour problems in childhood, and to the personality difficulties of youth and adulthood. The men or women who think everyone is against them, who fly into senseless rages, who hunger for power and wealth, who are ridiculously prudish or coarsely vulgar, who are afraid of new experiences or resentful of authority—such people are in many, if not the majority of cases, paying the penalty of mismanagement in the pre-school years.

If the child has had a good nursery-school experience he passes to the kindergarten and then to the primary and secondary schools with foundations well laid for his future maturity. In the primary school he should gain his first definite introduction to some of the fundamental subjects under which is classified the knowledge man has accumulated through the ages; and in such a way, that he is interested at least in some of them, and has the desire to know more about them as he continues his education.

It is, however, most unfortunate that except in rare cases most children leave school determined never to open again a history or geography book, or any of the literature they have read in class. This is a tragedy because these subjects, and others, selected with a clear understanding of the child's interests at each age, and presented in an interesting and dynamic manner, can be made an enthralling experience. History and geography are fascinating studies of man and of the world, but they are usually presented as studies of dry bones and dead matter. History as taught in many schools has little suggestion of being the story of the lives

and development of men and women who really lived, and whose needs, dreams, struggles and mistakes were much like ours today. This is the result of dull and unpsychologically planned text-books, and of teachers, who, having no love for the subject themselves, cannot clothe the dry bones with life and vitality.

When taught properly, history like literature should teach children to understand their own times, and should lead them towards a definite sympathy for people of all nations and classes; but it is too often taught with a strong national, political, religious or class bias, so that it breeds narrowness and intolerance, even when the facts taught have been forgotten. *When children are taught that their country is always right and the wrong is always that of the "foreigner," how can we ever have international understanding?* Most nations are taught to be self-righteous and intolerant to the stranger. This is illustrated by our typical Australian attitude towards the "Chink," the "Dago," the "Pommy."* It rarely occurs to the Australian that these "foreigners" may be superior to him in many ways, and may have in fact much the same attitude towards Australians.

By the time boys and girls are fourteen years of age, they should have some idea of the vocation for which they are fitted. Unfortunately the limited curriculum of most of our schools makes this impossible. The book-minded child is the best off. The child whose abilities lie in handwork is often given one hour a week for this occupation, and during the period all the children frequently do the same thing, carrying out the teacher's ideas, not their own. To my personal knowledge one school, a few years ago, gave the children modelling of card-board boxes every Friday afternoon for the whole three terms.

The waste of human energy, the waste of time and opportunity for both teacher and child that result from the rigid curriculum and teaching technique of so many schools is

* "Chink"=Chinaman. "Dago"=Italian. "Pommy"=Englishman.

deplorable. In any properly constituted educational system all children should have the opportunity in their school life to find out the things they are most interested in doing, and can do well.

Education, however, consists of much more than the acquirement of knowledge and skills. It implies a well-balanced personality that becomes better adjusted to the demands of life with every passing year. The success of a child at school should be judged not only according to the A's and B's of his public examinations but by his growth in such qualities as justice, broad-mindedness, honesty, self-control, initiative, sense of responsibility, determination, and consideration for and co-operation with others.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Man has more than a mind to be educated; he has a body as well. Only of very recent years has there been any real research into the order and rate of development of the child's nerves, muscles, etc. Physical Education now means something more than Physical Culture that can be taught by any person who reads up some manual on Swedish exercises or drill. It is a phase of education which should be given only by those who have had a specialised training that enables them to understand all phases of physical development, and the techniques necessary for gaining this.

The child should not be treated as though he has for the moment a body only, but his mind should be trained simultaneously with it. Modern Physical Education has little or no place for mass drill in which every child does the same thing as every other child at the word of command, and in which the movements can become so automatic that the mind almost sleeps. Natural activities, games, crafts, folk-dancing, etc., have largely taken the place of stereotyped exercises. In the new forms of activity the children are not working to a set pattern, but have a great deal of freedom in developing their own movements according to their



individual capacities and needs. Initiative, judgment, and a quick response to the demands of the situation in which they find themselves, as well as co-operation with their fellows, are an essential part of this Physical Education; and because the children are free to be themselves (though within certain limits) they enjoy their work and are rarely, if ever, bored. When the child can throw himself whole-heartedly into this physical work and is developing mentally, emotionally and socially at the same time, we see that it is impossible to draw any clear-cut line between the aims of scholastic and physical education, as both are striving for the complete development of the individual, though each emphasises certain special aspects.

ADULT EDUCATION

But education does not finish when the child leaves school. Some young people will learn a trade, some a profession; but all, no matter what their social status, should have training of some kind for which they have shown an aptitude. Apart from its monetary value, training has its psychological effect in giving a sense of confidence and self-respect. It should, of course, be the means by which the round peg finds its way to the round hole, so that economic misfits are avoided. Much of the disturbed state of the world is due to the discontent of such misfits, as well as to the frustrated impulses of the man who has no employment at all.

There is one more stage in our educational process that does not get nearly as much appreciation as it should, viz. *Adult Education*—not adult education of a technical or professional kind, but cultural, as is given by such bodies as the University Extension Board, the University Tutorial Department, the Workers' Education Association and the Australian Broadcasting Commission, etc.

Many people feel the need for mental stimulation that will not only give them something interesting and worthwhile for their leisure, but that will take them out of the more or

less humdrum round of their daily lives. They want to study in many directions—it may be music, economics, biology, drama, and so on—but they cannot do it alone since they do not know how to begin nor what to read or do. They also want to meet others with similar interests, since half the joy of learning and thinking along new lines is discussing ideas with others. Adult Education can fill the empty mental spaces left by the schools, and make life so much richer for the students that it reacts not only on their own lives, but especially on the home. The man or woman whose mind is developed, who thinks of other things than films, the races, domestic problems, business and people, is able to give more background to his or her children, can interest them in ideas of many kinds through the normal discussion that takes place in any intelligent family; home life in consequence becomes stimulating and interesting.

In this way the next generation reap the benefit of their parents' education and are helped towards an appreciation of what education can give them. A nation-wide Adult Education should be the responsibility of any modern democratic state, because it is the means by which the average citizen may be helped to understand the many problems of individual, civic, national and international life. The fact that human beings can suffer from a mental hunger that creates as many problems as physical hunger has only comparatively recently been recognised. The rapid growth throughout Australia of Discussion Groups is one indication of this desire for mental food, and the difference made in the lives of many who attend them shows that this is one means by which the sense of frustration (often unconscious) that is the result of lack of knowledge and lack of wider interests can be at least partially overcome.

EVIDENCES OF FAULTY EDUCATION

Though the greatest idealist does not expect ever to produce a perfect world inhabited only by perfect people, yet

there could and would be a great improvement did we realise, both in theory and in practice, the profound and far-reaching possibilities of education.

I shall conclude this chapter by mentioning a few of the most obvious signs that either the home, the school, or both are not realising their full responsibilities in this matter.

1. The many children and adults who are physically undeveloped.
2. The prevalence of "onlookers" rather than active participants in sport. The predominant interest in commercialised amusement.
3. The unscrupulous egotism whose goal is material success at all costs—the prevalence of "graft."
4. The disregard of public property and the lack of civic pride shown in the destruction of trees, seats, etc., and the litter on beaches and in parks.
5. The vocational misfits.
6. The tendency to follow the ideas of others, instead of using individual thought.
7. The lack of initiative and willingness to take responsibility.
8. The lack of interest in cultural subjects, in ideas. (We compare badly with many European peoples.)
9. Our national self-satisfaction and our attitude of superiority (often without foundation) towards foreigners.
10. The failure to take an interest in and to support needed reforms in the educational and social systems.

What, then, should education do for the children of a democratic state? It should develop men and women physically fit, with healthy and beautiful bodies; with minds trained to think clearly and rationally; with mental initiative that urges them on to seek new knowledge instead of being satisfied with the ideas and prejudices of the past; with a

love of beauty in art and nature; with well-balanced personalities that are the result of happy contacts with others and of confidence in their ability to meet life with success; with high standards of personal conduct and a proper sense of their responsibility to themselves, their families, the community and the state. Added to this they should have gained, through their development in family, school, college or University, a love of freedom and justice without which a democracy cannot live. So the future of our democracy lies in the hands of those who are bringing up the next generation and in the degree to which the purpose of that upbringing is accepted and shared by our schools and homes.

CHAPTER II

THE CHILD AND HIS FAMILY

THERE is, perhaps, no factor in the whole of human life which has such a far-reaching influence as that of the family. It is the family that first gives the child a sense of security or insecurity; that determines his attitude to others and to himself; that shapes his mental and moral standards and his standards of behaviour. The family is the background against which he first sees himself and is seen by others, until he has the power to make or remake life for himself. No matter how good its financial position or social standing, the family can do little for the real happiness of the child if, through the parents' lack of knowledge or their indifference to the needs of childhood, the young people have to face life eventually with personalities that are either warped or undeveloped.

THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

The most important factor in family life is the attitude of the parents to the children and of the children to one another. Parental attitudes are of many kinds, some good, some bad. For an ideal parent-child relationship there must be harmony and trust between the parents themselves; otherwise conflict, or at least an atmosphere of tension, is almost unavoidable, and the children will show the effects in symptoms of mental and emotional strain.

For the child to develop normally there should be mutual love and respect between parent and child, which should lead, as the child grows older, to friendship and mutual understanding. Only in such a family milieu can there be truly co-operative living, neither parent nor child dominating the other. Co-operation in the home is possible only when

all members feel they have a more or less equal place in it. The children should not think of it as the parents' home, as they so often do, but as "our home." They will do this naturally when they feel that they share with the parents the responsibility for its happy running. If parents have the right attitude towards children, it is remarkable how well the latter usually respond; and how willingly, as a rule, they will do the jobs allotted to them, provided, of course, these jobs are suited to their age and stage of development, and provided, also, the parents show they appreciate their co-operation.

In a home where this kind of parent-child relationship exists, the child is learning one of the most important lessons of life—that of self-government—in the miniature community of the home, and he is thus being prepared to take his future place in the larger community outside. Self-government does not mean self-will directed to selfish ends, a misconception that seems to exist in the minds of many people. It means that the child, having realised that others possess the same rights as he, learns to control his selfish impulses, not through compulsion, but voluntarily, for the good of all. It teaches him to respect law and to be willing to take responsibility. After all, is this not the basis of good citizenship? And is not the child being taught how to be a good citizen in the future? Of course, the parents must control the child's life for many years. If, however, they wish to help him, they should know how to guide him, so that he may learn to use well, wisely and happily all his powers of mind and body that will enable him to live fully both as an individual and as a member of the community.

But, unfortunately, homes in which there is a really harmonious parent-child relationship are not as common as one would wish, often because parents, though anxious to do the best for their children, do not always understand how to go about it. For one thing *they do not realise that their children, however young, are entitled to respect as individuals. They*

tend to regard them too much as their property, "my children." Each child is born with certain individual powers and possibilities, which must be recognised if his personality is to attain its best and fullest development. This development is not possible when parent or child tries or is allowed to dominate the other.

Parents who dominate their children try to control them by too harsh or too frequent punishment; surround them with prohibitions; crush them by constant criticism, ridicule or sarcasm; irritate and antagonise them by impatience and continual interference with legitimate activities; or, by their constant use of "don't," arouse such a sense of frustration that fear or rebellion follows.

Still other parents dominate their children by their possessiveness. They do not allow the child to grow up or to develop the independence necessary for his mental health from the first year onwards. These parents are usually over-anxious and exaggerate the importance of little things, their over-anxiety leading to the same frustrations as does possessiveness.

In other families it is *the child who is allowed* to dominate. The parents, through either misguided affection, lack of knowledge and true understanding, or through the tendency to avoid conflict by taking the line of least resistance, allow the child to dominate them. In these cases the child may love the parents (this is sometimes questionable), but he rarely, if ever, respects them. These children become selfish, greedy, unco-operative, and generally adopt the same domineering attitude towards others as they adopt towards their parents.

There is also *the self-sacrificing parent* who is constantly saying "Look at everything I do for you," and demanding gratitude and service in return. This usually leads the child to feel weighed down with a burden for which he is not responsible and which he feels incapable of carrying.

Other parents give their children *little, if any, guidance,*

while others place so much responsibility upon the child's shoulders that he cannot have the normal carefree childhood he should have. There is the *sentimental parent* who is always making an appeal to the child's emotions. "You wouldn't do that and hurt mummy so much." There are also parents *who think they reason with the child* but only encourage argument, and by their constant flow of words arouse the child's irritation. These and many other undesirable attitudes will be referred to in the following pages because the parents are so often responsible for many of the problems they deplore.

Before finishing this section, however, I should like to mention the parent, more commonly the father, who teases the child and as an excuse says that it "makes the child tough and teaches him to stand up for himself." This may be the effect in rare cases, but usually the child becomes more and more subject to fits of temper, ending in either rudeness or tears. In the latter case the child's distress is intensified by the laughter and ridicule that his outbursts call forth; in the former his sense of justice is outraged by the punishment that follows. Children who are frequently treated in this way learn to fear the father, and a real friendship can rarely grow up between them. If mothers are more prone than fathers to some of the faulty attitudes mentioned above, this teasing is a typical paternal fault and is, as a rule, an unconscious attempt on the father's part to make the child pay for his (the father's) conscious or unconscious irritation with the mother; or of his jealousy, due in all possibility to the attention she pays the child.

Most undesirable parental attitudes arise from the fact that the parents have their own personality problems, and until they have made some attempt to solve these, it is impossible for them to deal wisely with their children. Many parents who have become interested in child study say they soon realise that before they can educate and control their children they have to educate and control themselves. When parents realise that many of their difficulties with the children are due to

their own weaknesses and faults of character and see how these were created or to some extent increased by the mistakes of their own upbringing, they are in a much better position to help their children. Other aspects of this subject of the parent-child relationship were dealt with in *The Young Child and His Parents*.

BROTHER-AND-SISTER RELATIONSHIPS

Though the parents have the strongest influence upon the child, the children in the family also have a strong influence upon one another. We should remember that, though they are all members of the same family, it is incorrect to say, as is often done, that they are all born into the same environment. As the years pass the parents are not only older, and therefore must have changed in many ways—in health, in their outlook on life, their interests and their personal idiosyncrasies—but in many instances their social position has also changed. The father may be earning more or less. The struggle to live may not be so great, or may be greater, as the family increases. They may live in a larger or smaller house, in a better or a poorer district. They may have altered in their attitude to each other. The natural changes in themselves which come from increasing maturity will be intensified by the changes in the conditions under which they live.

All these things change the environment for each child, quite apart from the fact that each child not only has his own position in the family, but also changes the position of all the children born before him. It is in the attitude shown by the children to one another that the source of much trouble often lies. The older children may welcome the younger; on the other hand, they may be jealous, showing this in various forms of hostility. Sometimes there is a combination of both feelings, shown in alternating moods of affection and resentment; the latter expressing itself in forms that vary from teasing to apparent cruelty. The effect of a situation of this kind is bad for both the older and the younger

children. The older ones will be difficult because of the sense of insecurity that has developed in them, their fear that their parents love the younger ones more than they love them. This, of course, breeds in them a sense of inferiority, which may express itself in such varied forms as shyness or timidity, aggressiveness or showing off.

The younger one is made unhappy by the hostility of the older ones which he probably, though not always, returns; at the same time he shows a strong tendency to cling to the mother, and, for a period at any rate, to exploit the power he has over her by being the baby. It is very difficult for the youngest child when still another baby is born, because he now finds his place usurped by the newcomer, while, perhaps, having still to contend with the hostility of the elder ones. The advent of the new baby may also have the effect of drawing the older children together in a common bond of antagonism, which is often shown by their general disobedience and active or passive hostility to the parents.

Fortunately all children do not grow up in this disrupted family atmosphere. *There are many homes in which the parents, through their sympathy and understanding, are able to build up a family life that calls out all that is best in the children.* The jealousy and hostility that so naturally rise between children, and are expressed so instinctively, are recognised by these parents as something that is not necessarily lasting, but can be gradually outgrown provided they have patience, wisdom and the willingness to give both thought and time to rebuilding the child's lost sense of security. How this can be done is fully dealt with in the chapter on "The Jealous Child" in *Talks to Parents*. In such homes, though there may be certain natural antagonisms due to the conflicting personalities of the children, the general atmosphere will be one of family affection, friendship and happy co-operation. These homes give the children the very best background for developing a full and satisfying adjustment to life.

PARENTAL PROBLEMS

Even when parents know a good deal about the need for setting up good parent-child relationships they often find many difficulties in the way. Some of these we shall now discuss.

(1) The House versus the Child

One of the most common difficulties experienced by mothers is that of coping with domestic duties and the various demands connected with the house. Of course, these things are very important; for the orderly running of the home, the punctual performance of domestic duties helps to create the stable and attractive background so necessary for family life. Nevertheless, they need to be kept in perspective. A woman who loves her home and feels she has to make every effort to keep it as perfect as possible, often neglects her children in consequence. This is usually done unconsciously. When it is suggested that the young child needs assistance in his play, or that the older children should have her companionship for some period each day, she says this is impossible. It may be difficult, but its impossibility should not be accepted without a good deal of thought. The house-proud mother will even go so far as to expect a house with children to look as "unlived-in" as if there were no children living there at all. Though children should not be allowed to play all over the house, we must expect them, no matter how well brought up they may be, to leave a toy or a book sometimes in some place where it does not belong. It is not enough for the parents to give the children physical care, and an attractive house to live in. This will not develop in them the love and friendship that all normal parents desire from their children.

The mother should realise that the home, at its best, is only a background—the lifeless shell that shelters the living family. It does not grow; it does not change with the years;

it has in itself no power to influence the children who live in it. The influence of the home lies in its people. The children, on the other hand, do change; they will influence others throughout the whole of their lives, and it is the parents who play the greatest part in making that influence one for good or ill.

This means that both father and mother have to decide which comes first, the lifeless house or the living children. The decision would seem obvious.

It is much better to neglect the house a little; to let it go sometimes without a dusting or a sweeping, to have a few toys lying about, or to let some weeds grow in the garden, so that we may have the time to share common pleasures with the children. Parents should find time to go for a picnic occasionally with the youngsters; to read a book with them; or to discuss with the older ones the activities and ideas that interest them. For the sake of the children the house and garden can be kept quite well enough by making a compromise with one's desire for house perfection. Parents who do this, and give their children more companionship, find without exception that they gain much more than they lose. The children show by their more thoughtful and considerate attitude that they appreciate the greater companionship. The home, therefore, becomes more than just the place where the family eats and sleeps. Parents are no longer just the older people who provide for the family's physical wants, keep the house and the family in order, and only occasionally share their interests and pleasures.

(2) *Relatives*

Another frequent cause of difficulty in the home is relatives, especially those who happen to be living in the same house. To begin with, it makes difficulties for the child who has to meet the demands of a number of adults who, because of their adulthood, regard themselves as being naturally in positions of authority over him. In such situations a child

cannot help becoming "difficult," because whatever he does someone will probably disapprove or correct him. The child naturally becomes resentful and confused by this multiple authority, and behaviour problems develop.

It is very difficult for the parents also, especially for the mother, who is in closer contact with the home. Her sympathies are most frequently, though not always, with the child; but she fears to antagonise grandparents, aunts, or any other adult concerned. As a rule the parents' protests bring little result. The situation is bad enough if the relatives are visitors in the home; but it is infinitely worse if the parents and children are living in the house of the relatives. I think the difficulty usually lies in conflicting ideas of child management and of discipline in particular. One believes in correction and punishment, the other believes in giving the child his own way. The mother, perhaps, tries to bring the child up according to modern methods; the relatives, especially grandparents, may think this is all nonsense and that it is right for the child to be indulged because "he is so little, and can only be young once." The child is placed in exactly the same position as he is when there is conflict between the parents. He is confused by the two opposing standards of conduct and does not know which is right. He will obviously become more and more uncontrolled and uncontrollable, because he is being encouraged by one or the other to give way to his natural primitive impulses. What is to be done about it?

Whether their ideas are right or wrong, the parents must take full responsibility for bringing up their children in their own way. If they are intelligent and wise they will be prepared to listen to advice given them by those whose wisdom they respect, provided this is not done in the children's presence. The modern parent, who understands something of the best methods of child-upbringing, does not respect the ideas of the older generation simply because they have lived longer and retain many of the prejudices of the

past. After all, each generation of parents must bring up their children in their own way; and though they may receive a certain amount of guidance from older people, they must put everything to the test themselves. They must try out their own methods, which have been developed through reading, discussion and thought. A serious problem may arise through the distress of parents whose attempts at putting their own ideas into practice are being constantly frustrated by relatives whom they love. The distress alone, quite apart from the effects of the different points of view, must affect the child who is very sensitive to any suggestion of tension or conflict in the atmosphere of the home.

A large number of parents seem to accept these unsatisfactory situations as being unalterable. But, in many cases, something positive and constructive can be done. Much depends, however, upon the approach that is made. In too many cases parents allow the situation to develop too far before they make a stand. They have become so emotional that they are no longer in a sufficiently detached state of mind to handle the matter rationally. If they approached their relatives in a calm and reasonable manner, and as though they (the relatives) were intelligent and reasonable people, willing to see a reasonable point of view, a satisfactory discussion of the situation would probably follow, instead of a heated argument in which both sides may say things that are hard to forgive. The assumption that the other side knows nothing and is simply governed by prejudice, often makes an already bad situation worse or leaves it practically unchanged.

It may take a good deal of courage on the part of young parents to approach their relatives with direct criticism of their good intentions; but when their treatment is having a bad effect on the children it should be done, and in many cases it works. After all, the relatives also love the children and want to do the best for them, but they should grant the parents the right, which they also should have had

in their youth, of bringing up their children in their own way.

But it is not only in matters of discipline that relatives and friends often create difficulties. They may make remarks that suggest to the children ideas that the parents have deliberately avoided. For instance, they may threaten the children with policemen and bogymen if they are naughty, though this may be done partly in fun. The parents may be trying to prevent the children becoming prematurely sex-conscious, and are, therefore, distressed at hearing them being asked who is their boy or girl friend, or being teased if they seem to show preference for a child of the opposite sex. The parents may have carefully avoided commenting in the child's presence upon such characteristics as shyness, thumbsucking, peculiarities of speech or appearance. They know very well that such comments cannot help the child, but may develop in him a sense of inferiority which may either intensify these undesirable characteristics or develop a tendency to "show off." The children may have been brought up on good health lines, having been discouraged from eating between meals and from indiscriminate indulgence in sweets. Relatives can show the most extraordinary disregard for the parents' wishes in these matters.

Allied to these is the habit some relatives have of always bringing the children presents whenever they visit the house, despite the parents' wishes to the contrary. In such cases the child's affection often ceases to be inspired by a natural love for the person, but is given because of what he expects to receive. It is not at all unusual to hear children say when being told that an aunt or grandparent is coming to visit them, "I wonder what she is bringing me today?" or to greet them with, "What have you brought me?" This habitual giving may be the result of affection, but in many cases it is probably an unconscious expression of a sense of insecurity on the adults' part and their fear that they will not have the children's love unless they buy it. They do not

realise that unless the child's love is given spontaneously it is not worth having. Many of these things may be done unconsciously the first time, but unfortunately many relatives refuse to consider the parents' wishes, which is not only a discourtesy, but a serious offence against the rights of parenthood.

MAKING THE HOME ATTRACTIVE TO THE CHILD

There is one other point it would be wise to emphasise while we are considering the building-up of a satisfying home-life for the child. Parents often complain that their children never want to stay at home. At all ages many children seem to prefer playing in other children's houses rather than in their own. They make a fuss if they are told they must stay at home after their return each day from school or kindergarten. As they grow older this tendency probably increases, and they show in a multitude of ways that they consider their home dull, uninteresting and unattractive, and the parents dull and stodgy. This attitude is so common that it is worth serious consideration.

Why do children develop this attitude? I think that the germ of it lies in the situations already mentioned: that the parents do not build up a bond of friendship and comradeship with their children through sharing common experiences. Unless parents are willing to give a certain amount of time to the children, to show them that they want their companionship and are prepared to be interested in what interests them, a barrier soon begins to rise between them. Showing an interest does not mean that the parents should constantly ask the children what they have been doing at kindergarten or school, or when they have been paying a visit. Many children show quite clearly that they resent being questioned, as though they feel their parents are intruding into their "private lives." It does mean, however, that parents should be willing to listen and to show interest when the child comes to them full of some experience he has

had, or some plan he has made. This applies equally to children of every age, and by sharing experiences with their children, parents not only build up an excellent parent-child relationship but are being helped also to keep their own freshness of outlook and elasticity of mind.

Another very important point is that *children of every age should be encouraged to bring their friends to their home*. Parents should show, when possible, personal pleasure in welcoming the visitors and, without in any way interfering with the youngsters' activities (except when necessary), show their interest when it is asked for, and make, at times, some slight effort to increase the happiness of the visit. Children are very sensitive (especially as they grow older) to the attitude of their parents to their friends, and like to feel that the latter are appreciative of their home and parents. Normal young people want to be happy in the home and, for some years, would like it to be the centre of their social life. To bring this about need not entail more than a minimum of time or expense for the parents, but it does demand a gracious, thoughtful and interested attitude to their children's friends.

PARENTS ARE INDIVIDUALS AS WELL AS THEIR CHILDREN

But parents need to do more than this. They need to remember that they are not only parents but should be distinct personalities as well. They should try to prevent themselves becoming so immersed in their home or business that their minds become narrow and stale. Children will not find the home attractive when parents have no ability to develop with them; when they seem unable or unwilling to think along new lines and to consider any of the new interests and ideas that the children bring to the home. No matter how much of their time is taken up with home or business there are many ways in which they can keep their minds open to new thoughts and influences, if they wish. For example, some women plan to do their ironing and

sewing during the sessions of the School Broadcasts, and have found that this has not only given them common ground for discussions with their children but that their minds are refreshed by the temporary escape from domestic concerns. Women who are more or less tied to the house have a marvellous source of recreation and interest in the radio, if they know how to use it—as a means for gaining new interests as well as for passing the time.

Of course, it would be much better if they could so organise their home life that they are able to get out one day, or part of one day, each week for some outside interest or just to meet other people. It is equally good for the father to make a point of following an interest of some kind. The importance of this on the child and its influence in the building up of an interesting and stimulating environment for the child is dealt with in the next chapter, "The Father in the Home."

In this chapter we have considered some of the most outstanding factors in the development of a satisfactory home life for the child. In most, if not in all of them, we have noticed that there is one point in common—that the happiness of the children and of the parents lies in the building up of an harmonious and co-operative relationship between them, and that this depends almost entirely on the parents. If parents love and respect the children as individuals, guiding them when necessary but gradually loosening their control as they become more capable of self-government; if they build up a bond of common pleasures and interests, the home will be a happy one, for parents and children will feel that it is a symbol of the happiness they have so often shared.

CHAPTER III

THE FATHER IN THE HOME

BY RALPH A. LEVY

WHILE the development of Mothercraft has been an outstanding feature of the present generation, that of Fathercraft has lagged sadly behind. Even in these enlightened days, when nearly all mothers attend clinics for the physical well-being of their children, and many attend child-study classes for the psychological benefits, the place of the father in the general scheme of upbringing is not yet fully appreciated. In books published as recently as 1942 little or no mention is made specifically of the father's job, although his help is taken for granted in many cases.

Nevertheless, apart from being merely a collaborator with the mother, the father has a unique contribution to make to his child. That this is so was clearly shown during the war when so many fathers were perforce absent from their homes over a period of years; sometimes, in fact, extending over the child's whole life-time. In their children we see problems and disorders arising from this lack of balanced parenthood. In this one word "balance" we have the clue to the main function of fatherhood. No mother, by her very nature, can provide that masculine outlook so necessary if the child is to lead a balanced life. This is the father's job, and when that job is done, and done well, the benefit to the child is inestimable.

I have divided this chapter into three sections, each dealing with an aspect of the father's place in the home. Needless to say, any division is purely arbitrary, for the sake of convenience, so there is bound to be a certain amount of overlapping. First, father is regarded as a husband, second

as head of the family unit, and thirdly, and most important of all, as the father of his children.

Section I

THE FATHER AS HUSBAND

It may be thought that the husband's relationship to his wife is in no way relevant to a talk on fatherhood, but, in reality, it is the very basis of the matter. A. S. Neill said: "There is no such thing as a problem child, only a problem parent," and I will go so far as to say that problem parents do not occur when there is unity and harmony between husband and wife. Even when that relationship is not perfect, surely, with intelligent people, it can be made to approach nearer to perfection when the advent of a child forces them to accept new responsibilities.

So much artificiality has been introduced into the consideration of difference between the sexes that it has taken forces of modern necessity to prove that, after all, men and women are not so very different. The modern girl has been a wonder of the age. She has taught us a very necessary lesson. She has invaded so-called men's provinces successfully and performed their jobs successfully.

This leads to the question: "What does marriage hold for the girl who has been accustomed to some activity in which she has used to their maximum her intelligence and training?" Married life and child-upbringing must take the place of these activities, on an equal footing with them, if we are to have successful marriage, and hence successful children.

Here the husband can help. He must make marriage attractive, not by consigning his wife to the kitchen and laundry, but by making her interests his, and his interests hers. Mutual likes and dislikes help tremendously, of course. To share the same pleasures, the same kinds of friends, the same love of home-making, gardening, cultural pursuits—all these are ways of binding man and wife closer together. All

this may sound very obvious, but on looking round at those people we know, including even ourselves, how many really happy marriages based on mutual interests do we find?

A step farther than this is the exchanging of tasks. There is no reason in the world why a man should not sweep the house, do the washing, wash-up, not as a special bonus out of the goodness of his heart, but as a normal part of the home-routine. Reciprocally, it is very pleasant to have a wife helping in the garden, or in the making of the fowl-house. These shared tasks cease to become tasks, but instead form pleasurable episodes, linking and binding the two together.

More particularly, however, we are here concerned with the young couple who are, or are about to become, parents. At this time the man's part comes even more into the foreground. First there must be the mental set-up suitable to his new state. He must accept his new responsibilities, and the more they are his, even before the baby comes, the greater will be his pleasure in the new arrival. He can see to the obtaining of the cot and the nursery furniture; if possible, make or paint them himself.

One of his main duties in these days before the baby comes will be to think about the kind of attitude he has to his wife. Expectant motherhood can be a very serene and tranquil period, or it can be a very trying one. There may be much sickness, much unpleasantness, and it is the duty of the husband to make this period of the wife's motherhood as easy and happy as possible. More consideration in every way can be given, more tasks undertaken, and, if there are children already, a greater share in looking after them can be undertaken by the father. This gradual assumption of responsibility will make easier the time when the new addition adds its extra cares and burdens to the household, as well as its extra joys.

A most vital aspect of this pre-natal time is the consideration of the question of methods of child-upbringing. This

applies particularly to the first child. Just as it is a good plan to learn to drive a car before buying one, so it is wise to learn something about child-upbringing before the child is born. Mistakes in management cannot be altogether avoided, but the fewer they are, the better. There would be fewer, if at least the principles of child-care were discussed before the babe actually arrived. This is the time to seek counsel from those who have made child-care their life-work—not merely to depend on the advice of those who have reared one or two children, often with indifferent success.

There are many books on the subject and, though we may not—and should not—agree with a lot that is said in some of them, nevertheless they should give us a grasp of general principles. Some people seem to think that a complete book of rules arrives with the baby and that all one has to do is to trust to one's own instincts. Nothing could be more dangerous. Naturally our own feelings are a fairly reliable guide, but they sometimes lead us astray, nor are they always consistent. Anyhow, no two people can feel the same on every occasion, but as child-upbringing should be a mutual affair, surely it is proper that a concerted plan should be drawn up ahead, before the tumult and shouting has yet had time to start.

Another way in which the husband can help is by restricting his interests, or rather changing them, so that they centre more closely round the home. This will prepare the way, and avoid what will be a sacrifice if carried out only when the family arrives, or is increased. Wheeling a pram may appear a poor substitute for wielding a golf club, but the results are great in proportion to the temporary inconvenience. It is not necessary, of course, to give up everything, but the more the home can become the focal point of activities, the more it will become that integral unit, that self-contained community which gives such wonderful happiness later on.

The husband should encourage his wife to attend clinics,

both pre-natal and post-natal, otherwise her own enthusiasm may wane. He can also assist his wife by seeing that the daily routine of the baby is not interrupted. His help may be very valuable, particularly in the case of the paternal grandparents. Few young mothers, faced with a determined and probably patronising mother-in-law bent on picking up the baby at the wrong time, will have the temerity to insist on what she knows is right. If, however, the husband handles this situation, it is easier for the wife to stand firmly by what she knows is right. A man can handle his mother with a much surer touch than a woman can her mother-in-law.

Section II

THE FAMILY MAN

As head of the family, fathers have a position to keep up. There is a certain dignity which need not be lost even in these days of no domestic help, when they become assistant cooks and bottle-washers. By dignity I do not, of course, mean the old-fashioned kind that was born of the belief that man was the superior being. Men need not lose dignity even though they do help with the domestic chores. Still, their very size, their position of general handy-man, the fact that they are usually the financial and economic support of the family, all these things tend to colour the picture children have of what goes to make up a father. And it is a very important and dignified figure. Father represents the family, and nothing can be more embarrassing to his children than a father who fails to be a worthy representative.

As a family man, another important duty falls to the family head. He is the outside contact, the one who brings the world to the home. It is largely his province to see that the home's interests are as wide and as varied as possible. The more fascinating the home life, the less temptation there will be for the children to seek amusement and entertain-

ment outside. More important still, a full and satisfying home life keeps the training of the children in the parents' hands, rather than in the hands of others.

Home interests may be divided roughly into three classes: manual, social and cultural. If the father is interested in manual work—carpentering, bookbinding, mechanical work of any kind—then, by a simple extension of his activities, he can include children of any age. Week-ends spent in gardening, or making anything and everything, can be truly delightful family times, with every member sharing in a co-operative effort.

For indoor hours, social and cultural pursuits are generally more suitable. Under this heading come art, music, reading and general conversation. There is no need to be a trained artist or musician to encourage the family to enjoy these pastimes. The wireless is a wonderful educator, properly used, and it is up to parents to educate themselves in as many branches of different interests as they can, so that they may be interesting people to their children. Undoubtedly, motion pictures have gained such huge and widespread popularity mainly because so many people are too mentally lazy to entertain themselves. "The pictures," in turn, complete the vicious circle by making those same people still more lazy. If we can rouse ourselves from our lethargy, and make our homes a centre for interesting amusement, a much richer and more varied life for all of us will be the result.

Section III

A. THE FIRST EXCITING YEAR

The father's job begins seriously from the moment the child comes home. Although the strain he has gone through in the past month may have been considerable, it is as nothing compared with that which the mother has experienced. Therefore, he should be more balanced, less nervy

and excitable, and thus much the better person to handle the babe in his first few days.

Quite apart from this, there is a sound principle behind the idea that father should pick up baby whenever possible—only at necessary times, of course. In his first few months a baby's most crying need (literally) is food, and whoever satisfies that need will receive his mercenary affections. A father, of course, cannot feed the babe, but he can do the next best thing: he can be the first face the child sees when he is picked up for his meals. By constant association, the person who picks him up is linked with the satisfaction of his wants, and very soon he will actually be glad to see his father. The father, naturally, is not always available, but there are certain times when he could and should do the picking up—for example, at the night and early morning feeds, and during the week-ends; also any time during the night when the baby happens to waken—this last means also that the mother has an uninterrupted night's rest.

There is no reason why the father should not, also, be able to prepare the bottle when the infant has been weaned, or wash and dress his small son or daughter. Apart from relieving the strain on the mother, and improving relations with her, two very important results will be noticed. First, the relation between father and child will benefit. The father gets a sense of added intimacy, gained only by doing things for the child. Secondly, the child comes to look on him not as a person only to be seen on occasions, but as one upon whom he can depend. In fact, after a while, it is immaterial to the child if mother or father attends to his wants. We may find, as others have found, that the child will confuse the parents, calling the father "mummy" and the mother "daddy." Surely no higher compliment could be paid than this.

Another of father's jobs should be toy-making. The first toys are necessarily simple—coloured balls, streamers, a rattle or two. Although these things can be bought, much

pleasure may be gained through spending a little time and effort on their construction, and the pleasure the child gets from them will be reflected in the father's pleasure watching. The principle behind all these things is that the father should step into the child's life at all possible times, not to replace the mother, but sharing with her all the joys and worries the little one brings.

B. THE TODDLING STAGE AND AFTER

Toy-making becomes increasingly important at the toddler stage, and the children themselves can help. Hobby horses are easy matters, and so are any number of trundling and pull-along toys so necessary at this age. When the child sees the father making such things, it puts on the toys a value which is impossible to assess, but which is nevertheless very real. Children have no sense of money values, so, if we wish them to appreciate and care for their belongings, they must not come too easily. They can readily appreciate the fact that anything which Dad has spent some time in making should not be regarded lightly.

It is at this period that manners begin to be of importance, so that a word here about family manners would not be out of place. It is acknowledged on all sides that a most difficult situation develops when mothers-in-law, aunts, grandparents, try to live with the young family, or when a married child returns to the fold.

One of the reasons for this is lack of manners. There is too much intimacy, too much criticism, too little privacy. We would never dare to speak to guests as we do to family. No restraints are imposed—in a word, manners go by the board. But manners are the oil that makes the wheels go round. "Please," "Thanks," "Do you mind?" "Excuse me," "May I?" are all so simple, yet so seldom heard in some family circles. Let us not wait until family visitors throw a strain on our reserve of politeness. Let us rather build up a constant habit of quiet speaking, thoughtfulness for others,

and manners generally which will smooth over so many rough spots.

This is when a father can help so much. The mother's nerves become frayed by the day's end, her voice sharpens and rises, and her edginess communicates itself to the children. Then father arrives. Shall he bring with him an aura of irritation and rudeness or rather a serenity which will make that period between his return and the children's bed-time the most delightful part of the day?

During the toddling age, and say up to five or six, the father can learn to know his children just as intimately as he desires. Most parents hope for comradeship and good fellowship with their children; few seem to attain it. One of the best ways for a man to get to know and understand his child is to take him or her—or them—out alone, without mother, once in a while. Sometimes to go to a place which will obviously interest a child—the beach, a park, a football match. Sometimes try a place which is not of such obvious interest. Father's tennis club can provide many hours of pleasure for a five-year-old son or daughter and, later on, this may be developed into other and wider interests. The point to remember is that children who are enjoying themselves present no behaviour problems. It is only the bored child, dragged round the city shopping, who causes trouble. Father can be a fascinating person, and should exploit all the hero-worship that is natural to children. He can be the giver of pleasures, the one whom a child is proud to point out to his friends.

This must not be done at the expense of firmness and control. The desire to be the "good fellow" with children often means that father dispenses the treats, then walks off the premises while mother copes with a suddenly unruly offspring who demands yet more pleasures.

It is useless if father hands over the reins of government to mother. This may seem to him a very desirable course, but it has bad results. The children will appeal to him against

the mother's authority, and he will have none of his own. On the other hand, he must not become the ogre who has to carry out mother's threats. Each must bear his or her own share of the unpleasant as well as the pleasant duties, and discipline and punishment are parts of these duties.

Father's attitude is most important, as by it he can convey the right atmosphere, or the wrong one. Children are quick to sense when anything is amiss, or when they have said the wrong thing, and here we are on highly dangerous ground. A look, a word in the wrong tone, will arouse a host of doubts in the child's mind, doubts which will be for the time voiceless, but which will grow until they can cause reticence and insecurity at a later stage, when the utmost confidence in the parents' goodwill is absolutely necessary.

Finally, a father can be highly important in keeping the balance between his children. Jealousies are bound to creep in, unless very great care is taken. Even if the parents exercise the utmost tact and discretion, friends and relatives are almost certain to make favourites, and it is the duty of the parents, particularly of the father, to rectify this where possible. Far better to offend a well-meaning but one-sided outsider than to have the evil of jealousy enter the family circle. Possibly the most dangerous time is when a new arrival comes on the scene. The time for avoiding any danger is before, not after, the new baby comes. If visitors are warned that the new infant does not really care whether he sees them or not, but that the older child already in possession is used to their attentions, much harm can be avoided. Often father is the one who mentions this, particularly to members of his own family. Also, he can see that he himself shows the same kindness, the same favours, the same manners to each of his offspring, and allows no other attitude to enter the home. Scrupulous fairness is necessary. If he cannot take all the children out at once, then he can take them each in turn. Sometimes, one child may need special consideration, because certain behaviour problems

due to a sense of insecurity already exist. This consideration should be given with great tact in order to avoid arousing the resentment of the other children.

C. SCHOOL DAYS

The opportunity for companionship between father and child grows steadily during school years. Interests should become closer and boys, particularly, tend to develop interests similar to those of the father. However, this should not be a period during which the father grows closer to his son and farther away from his daughter; because there can be just as firm a bond between father and daughter as between father and son. As I said at the beginning, a lot of the differences between the sexes are man-fostered and artificial and this may clearly be seen at the school age of children. Apart from natural differences, which are few, girls can be just as absorbed as boys in woodwork, painting, gardening, bookbinding, or a host of other activities. These are healthy interests which widen the scope of their vision, even if they should be dropped later on, when the more self-regarding age develops.

Gardening is a fine pastime for children, and they will love it if it is not forced on them. Giving them a patch of garden is not a bad idea, but letting them help in the whole garden is a better one. If a few lettuce are planted among the carnations, it is not a very serious matter, compared with the sense of mutual ownership and companionship developing from the shared activity. We must remember, also, that children are spasmodic in their interests. So are we, but as adults we can realise what would be the result of a slackening of effort. Therefore we force ourselves to weed the plot this week, knowing what it will be like if we do not. The child has no sense of the future. It is undoubtedly galling to see a child start off, full of enthusiasm, with our help, and within a month or less to find him riding a tricycle instead, with no thought for his former interest. Still we must be patient,

and soon the interest will return. Love for the garden will not be lessened by "forced labour." On the other hand, it can be pointed out, without undue stress, that the patch which started off so beautifully has deteriorated with neglect, and the lesson will soon be learned.

Similarly with other interests. If a boy or girl becomes interested in woodwork, get a set of small tools for the would-be carpenter, not toy ones, but the smallest size in the real tools. Let him care for his own, and pay the penalty if they rust. Let the child take part in doing real things, helping to mend the table, even if the rail is not quite straight, rather than just pottering round aimlessly, with no purpose in the work.

Going to school is a vast experience in a small life, and brings its own problems. To the father, unable to make any personal contact with the school itself, it tends to become a section of the child's life in which he has no part. This can be avoided by taking an interest in any Parents' Association which may be formed, and by attending any of the school's evening functions. Here he may meet the Class Teacher and Head Teacher, who should be able to discuss the child with him from an entirely different angle. The father can judge the child's reactions to social contact, and thereby test the value of his or her home training.

The school age is the age for the beginning of interest in Sport. This is definitely father's sphere. Without wishing to give the matter undue emphasis, it is remarkable how much difference it makes to boys or girls if they are reasonably proficient at sport. The time for training is from the late toddler age, to the early school days—perhaps eight. When we boil it all down, what does it amount to? Most of our games are ball games; and to play them reasonably well, a child needs to be able to catch, throw, kick and hit a ball with fair accuracy. If systematic training is given in this in the early years, no trouble will be encountered later on. Of course, the child will not know he is training. To him, it will

be just another fascinating game played with that wonderful being, father. For catching and kicking, a large ball is preferable. In the earliest stage, let the child catch in his arms a ball thrown gently from not more than a few feet. "That's a good one" is praise indeed for a successful catch and "Try this one" sufficient if it misses. For throwing and hitting, a tennis-ball is best, even two-to-three-year-olds being able to handle a ball this size with ease. Let them try to hit a mark, softly, underarm at first, then throwing overarm, until accuracy is gained. Skittles made of empty bottles (used on grass or a mat) or pieces of wood are splendid practice, and to be greeted with "I knocked down five in three goes, Dad," is warming to the heart.

A ping-pong bat, a small tennis racquet, or cricket bat is best to start off the hitting. Bowling on the ground towards the batsman eliminates all but one difficulty, and for mid-air hitting, a ball, punctured, and tied by a long string to the clothes-line, gives excellent practice.

There can be little greater pleasure for any child than to know that he or she can safely invite friends home without wondering what their reception will be. Surely it is up to us to see that our home is an attractive place for our children to entertain in. How else are we to keep them there, not wanting the distraction of outside elements to an excessive degree? Formal parties can sometimes be given but they should be rare. Informal visitors should be made welcome, even if we do not quite agree with our children's taste in the choice of friends. Perhaps they do not like our friends either. When these friends visit in the evenings or during the weekends, father can play an important part in their entertainment, and be quite an attraction around the place. I do not mean that he is to down tools and set up as a child's entertainer; in fact, his own work or pleasure need hardly be affected. Just by his manner, friendly and helpful, can he make the young guests feel at home. Perhaps ice-creams on a hot day would not be out of place, or a hand to rig up a

swing or see-saw. These things need not disturb him much, but there is a whole world of difference in the atmosphere if father's attitude is helpful.

The problem of discipline is with us again at this stage, and in many cases father comes more into the picture, especially with lively sons. Control is necessary, but not with a heavy hand. The seat of the pants is decidedly *not* the place on which to impress our authority. If the child is to learn self-discipline, he must be given an opportunity to exercise this faculty. Let the circle of freedom be ever-widening. If, sometimes, we allow a little too much, and the child shows that he is not ready to use properly the new liberty, then we can withdraw it until a later stage.

Everywhere the principle is the same. Let us think, before we punish: "Is this constructive? Will it help the child to gain self-discipline?"

As the child progresses through school-days, the field for excursions will widen considerably. Longer outings may be undertaken, even camping week-ends or accompanying father on business trips. Greater and greater intimacy will develop, and the pleasure the father will receive will be great indeed, laying the foundation for a life-time of friendship and confidence.

D. THE YOUNG GROWN-UP

And now we enter the final phase of childhood—that glorious, hesitant, brave and shy period when the youth or maiden stands on the brink of Life. Now we can see just how much our previous training has been valuable, and how much it has prepared our young ones to care for themselves. This is the age of experiment, of suddenly broadened horizons, of new impulses and experiences, of leaps in the dark and as sudden withdrawals to the security of childhood. For no child advances in regular steps. There is the timid or bold reaching out, and the drawing back until surety and confidence are gained. Here we parents must stand as bulwarks,

as steady rocks upon which the adolescent can hold, gasping, until ready for the next adventurous striking out. If we fail them here, all the good that we have done will be lost. If we succeed, our children will advance confidently, leaving our protection for their own, but never leaving the ambit of our love.

For many children, puberty, the awakening of the adult sexual urges that herald their full maturity, is an enormous, soul-shaking experience. This is the second stage of sexual curiosity, and here, unlike the first baby questions, which we could await before answering, here, I say, we must not wait but prepare the girl or boy for what is to come.

A knowledge of what will happen during menstruation must be given to the girl before she experiences it, so that she is protected from too great an emotional upset, from inaccurate explanations from others not qualified to speak.

For the boy, a right attitude and ready acceptance of his new status will be developed by learning about emission and sexual development, together with a full knowledge of the dangers to which he is now exposed, from a father who has his whole confidence—a confidence built up by the friendship and companionship of previous years.

Coupled with the physical changes which take place at this time will come an altered attitude to the opposite sex. Until puberty, children are largely homosexual—that is, they tend to associate with their own sex—but they now look to members of the opposite sex for companionship.

Just as during the school-days I suggested that father's attitude towards his children's friends could make a great difference to the general atmosphere, so in this period we must force ourselves to tolerate our children's calf-loves. These are painful affairs, calling for all our patience, toleration and kindness, if we are to avoid driving the adolescent into wrong channels and undesirable habits. Here, unity between parents is more urgent than ever before. This is a phase that can long be foreseen, and the attitude to be

taken, the privileges to be allowed, the restrictions to be imposed must be discussed well in advance, so that a complete united front can be shown, with no possibility of appeal from one parent to the other. Father's place in this period of his children's lives is of the highest importance. The "heavy father" attitude is no help, neither is the over-indulgent one. A balanced, sane, firm and kind attitude can help the young man or woman immeasurably, and bring respect from his or her friends.

Finally, a career has to be found for the new grown-up. Early tendencies may have been shown, during childhood, or they may not. In either case, this is the crucial time, when a wrong step may mean years wasted, and the development of a sense of unhappy frustration.

To ensure that this does not happen, let us use all the forces that modern science has evolved. Vocational guidance has reached a high plane of development; talks with school teachers and head teachers are helpful; the child's own desires and interests must be taken into account; and above all, the help and guidance of enlightened parents will provide all that is possible for a right choice.

Father can search his circle of friends and acquaintances to bring to the home those in varied occupations, so that some light may be shed for the adolescent on what each career entails.

CONCLUSION

Thus, throughout a child's life, from birth to adulthood, and far beyond, we can see that the place of a father is not a nebulous one. Nor is it merely in supporting the mother and being an echo of her thoughts and decisions that he can be of most use. For he is an individual, with his own ideas and inspirations, individual yet blending with his wife in her ideas, forming between them that perfect father-mother combination which can be of such assistance to their children.

Those fortunate young ones who have parents of this calibre, who are given wise, firm, kind and understanding guidance from their infancy onwards, will repay those just-as-fortunate parents by their love, confidence and behaviour—parents and children forming that most wonderful of all happiness-givers, the perfect family unit.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHILD'S EMOTIONAL LIFE

IN our dealings with children we should try to remember that the strongest factor in their lives is their emotions. No matter how old and how intelligent a child may be, his behaviour is more frequently influenced by his feelings than by his reason. The younger the child the truer this is. This is the case also with adults. We know how often our intelligence tells us to do one thing, but the strength of our emotions makes us do exactly the opposite; so that we end by doing something that we know quite well is either foolish or wrong.

If we grown-ups, with all our experience, allow ourselves to be thus influenced by our emotions, we should realise how necessary it is for us to be patient and understanding with children when they misbehave. Their misconduct is usually the result of some legitimate need which is being either thwarted or ignored. For example, a child of any age may, in spite of punishment, persist in wandering away from his own yard or garden. What is it that may be driving him to this continued disobedience? It may be due to certain undesirable factors in his home life. Is his need for companionship being satisfied? Has he interesting playthings and occupations? Is his need for a sense of security through the understanding love of his parents being met? Or is he trying to escape from his parents because they are uncontrolled and impatient, are constantly nagging at him or punishing him, so that he suffers from a strong sense of injustice or frustration? Truancy from school is also due to somewhat similar causes—frustration and boredom.

The young child does not always understand what is driving him away from his home, but as he grows older he will

become more and more aware of the reasons for his unhappiness, and as a school-child may consciously strive to meet his unsatisfied needs. This can happen to children of any social stratum, rich or poor.

IMPORTANCE OF THE CHILD'S EMOTIONAL LIFE

In looking through some cuttings I came across one from an old issue of the *Parents' Magazine* which is so much to the point that I am going to quote at length from it. Unfortunately I do not know who wrote the article.

"Much has been learned in recent years concerning the physical development of children; but we are still sadly ignorant concerning the emotional life of children and its importance. Parents first begin to realise the difficulty of training the child's emotional responses during the period when he or she is emerging from babyhood into childhood, when speech is being learned, and the child enters the so-called 'negativistic' stage.

"This is the time when we encounter temper tantrums, acts of wilfulness, crankiness and all kinds of 'emotional' displays on the part of the child. So strong are these manifestations at times, and apparently so little connected with the actual incident or situation, that parents are dumbfounded, and entirely unable to understand the tremendous force in the child that seems to burst out at the most inconvenient times.

"It is at this period in life that the child first meets with controls, inhibitions and obstacles imposed from the outside. Feeling only the elemental push of his ego or his will, call it what you want to, he strives to make his individuality felt in a world that suddenly becomes full of outside necessities and responsibilities that cramp his style. What the adult must understand is that a sudden emotional display is the child's attempt to win through and assert himself at some point.

"At this stage, if the child could explain to adults in words

of three or four syllables just how he felt about a lot of matters, there would be fewer spankings. Unfortunately he can't do this. The only way he can register a protest is to cry or kick or scream or behave in some other seemingly illogical and naughty way. He has discovered that he can't have things entirely his own way, always. He discovers that the elemental push of his impulse and will is being inhibited and he protests against this.

"Another thing which we must understand about the child in this period is that his emotions are entirely primitive and unsophisticated; he has not learned to have a specially controlled and finely shaded emotion for everything that happens. His emotional experiences are few: love, anger, joy. Stir him emotionally in any way and the result is a strong uneducated outburst of a single undifferentiated emotion. It is also true that when the child is balked and thwarted in the slightest way, he believes himself to be held down in everything, and an exaggerated illogical emotional explosion is apt to occur, much to the surprise of the adult.

"As parents we ought to recognise, I think, that the child's inherent will, his ego, the push which he seems to possess as a natural birthright, is not the same thing as his emotion. Inhibit his push and emotion develops. The problem is to teach him to modify this egotistical drive of his while at the same time permitting him to have the greatest possible number of outlets for the exercise of legitimate emotion.

"We ought to try to educate the child emotionally, by permitting him to use and develop his emotional life, and by teaching him to regulate, manipulate and differentiate his emotions as he matures.

"There are individuals who come to adulthood possessing an undifferentiated, uncontrolled emotional life. We have all encountered these people. Their emotional outbursts seem to us to be childish. These individuals are, we say, 'infantile.'

"On the other hand, we have met persons who are emo-

tionally 'dead,' inhibited, dried up. Their emotional life was never properly developed, never allowed to grow.

"These are just two examples of what may happen when parents do not understand the child's emotional expressions. On the one hand, we must give the child's emotions an outlet, help him to refine and develop them and, on the other, we must prevent them from being inhibited and turned inward. The child really must learn emotional expression, either in one way or another.

"Parents must realise the paramount importance of a natural emotional development in their children and attempt to show them, by their own example, the place of emotions in the pattern of life."

This is an excellent general statement of the importance of understanding and educating the emotions if life is to be in any way satisfactory. What should we do to help the child?

(a) LOVE

In his book, *Psychological Care of Infant and Child*, Watson maintains that the infant has three emotions that are natural to it—viz. love, anger and fear—and that all other emotions experienced in after-life are built up on one of these. Let us accept this and see how these emotions may be used in building up the child's life-pattern for good or ill.

In the life of the infant love has an entirely different meaning from that which it has in the life of an adult. What he actually feels we do not know; but we can recognise his love responses when he feels happy and secure. These responses vary, a smile may appear, he makes attempts at gurgling and cooing, and finally, in slightly older children, the extension of the arms, which may be regarded as the forerunner of the embrace of adults.

Many people do not realise that the infant does not love his mother just because she *is* his mother. His love is not the instinctive natural response of the child to the parent as such. A proof of this is that, if a mother dies, or is separated

from her child, the infant loves her substitute just as much, provided the substitute loves and cares for him as the mother would. We often find that a child loves his nurse better than his mother, in homes where the mother relegates all responsibility to the nurse. If parents leave a young child for a few weeks, when they return they often find the child has forgotten them, and is now loving whoever has cared for him in their place. Love, therefore, is conditioned by Love. The young child will generally love anyone who cares for him. From the beginning the child associates his feeling of comfort and security with his mother or his substitute-mother, so that in the end the sight of her face, the sound of her voice or footstep will call forth his love responses.

As the years pass many experiences—pleasant and unpleasant, happy and unhappy—become associated with the mother and father or their substitutes, and ultimately determine the strength or weakness of the child's love. If, for example, as the child grows older, the parents who loved and petted him often become impatient and smack him, he becomes confused because the people who have hitherto given him love and a sense of security are now calling forth different responses—those of fear and anger. If this occurs often, the original love is bruised and may eventually die. This change in the parents' attitude sets up a conflict in the child's emotional life. He wants to love his parents and yet, at times, he feels he does not, for anger or fear takes the place of love. These alternating moods of loving and hating develop a sense of guilt which expresses itself, as a rule, in behaviour problems. According to the age of the child they take such forms as: rudeness, disobedience, teasing and bullying younger children, running away from home and general unmanageableness.

If, as sometimes happens, the parents make too many demands on the child's love, he may become unhealthily dependent on them, crying bitterly when separated even for a short time and, as he grows older, may even refuse to leave

home for a holiday with people whom he knows and loves. He may, however, unconsciously resent the mother's constant play on his emotions, so that he becomes resistant towards her. The conflict set up between the child's love and his resentment becomes apparent in his alternating moods of affection and defiance.

If a child misbehaves, a parent should never say such things as "If you are naughty I won't love you" or "If you do that I shall get another little boy or girl." Nothing should be said that could make the child doubt the permanence and stability of the parents' love. An example of the effects of such threats upon a child is the case of a little girl of seven who, having discovered her mother was not at home on two occasions, believed she had been deserted. A short time after this she developed the habit of constantly running away from school to find out if her mother were at home. It is interesting to note that the mother did not connect the child's behaviour with her own frequent threats until the association was pointed out to her.

"Children should feel that their parents will never cease to love them no matter how strongly they may disapprove of their actions. They should always feel that there is someone to whom they matter supremely, they should feel assured of sympathy, protection and understanding, no matter what happens. All of us need this kind of reassurance, but how much more so the child who is inexperienced, uncertain, often blundering in his first approaches to an untried world. His parents, his mother in particular, stand for a place of retreat, a shelter to fall back upon when things become too hard. But the parents should be more than a retreat, they should be a reinforcement. The child must learn to rally his forces and attack his difficulties with renewed strength. Reassurance should never mean indulgence; the child should not be shielded from his mistakes or indulged and cosseted with sympathy, but given insight into his failures and then encouraged to go out again and do better. If the parents'

attitude is one of insight without reproach, of helpfulness that carries no stings or conditions, the child will probably return from time to time when he finds himself in need of counsel. He will find in his parents a firm foundation for his universe. This steadying influence is needed by the inexperienced child and youth." (Blatz and Blott.)

The normal child is prepared to love those who love him, but his love should not be demanded as a right, as an obligation on his part in return for what has been given to him. Unless love is given spontaneously it cannot be given at all. As adults we know we cannot love, or not love, to order; if we could, many of our most serious personal problems would not exist. And it is equally so with the child. All the parents can do is to provide the conditions in the child's life that are most likely to arouse his love, that will give him a sense of security and well-being, and the rest must be left to him.

The relations between parents and child should therefore be more than a physical bond; they should develop into a close friendship that will last as long as life itself, because it is based on spontaneous and mutual love and respect.

If parents can establish this type of parent-child relationship, it will give them and the child great happiness. And because the child is happy in the broadest sense he will find life worth living, and will be ready to adopt his parents' standards and values even though he may change them as he matures. If, however, he is unhappy, he becomes antagonistic to his parents and all they stand for; and he is liable to take up and follow any avenue of interest, whether it be good or bad, provided it offers him a means of excitement and forgetfulness.

We see, therefore, that the child's early love for his parents has a far-reaching influence upon his future development. It gives him not only a sense of security, but faith in others and in himself so that he faces life with confidence and courage. It helps him also to be at ease with others, so that he is neither shy nor aggressive in his social relations.

In other words, love helps the child to develop a balanced personality, untroubled by mental conflicts or fears. Many of the behaviour problems of children of all ages, from infancy to adolescence, would never occur did parents and children love and trust one another more.

(b) ANGER

We have seen how important love is in the child's life and how much of his happiness or unhappiness is influenced by it from the earliest days. What part may be played in his life by anger, and by the fighting impulse so closely associated with it? What are the situations that arouse these tendencies? And at what age do they first appear?

Anger is one of the three earliest emotions that may be called forth in the new-born. It is aroused so easily that unless great care be taken it may become a constant emotional state. It has been found, for instance, that hampering or restricting the movements of the new-born babe sends it into a fit of rage. No matter how gently the child's head or limbs may be held, the response is always the same. "The response is first struggling, then crying. The body stiffens, the breath may be held until the face is red with anger and may, in some cases, become black. The child begins to cry and then to scream, the legs are moved up and down and the arms, if they can get free, make striking or slashing movements. In somewhat older children any sort of restraint or interference may give a similar picture, except that the motor (muscular) response is more efficient, consisting in struggling, striking, kicking and biting. . . . You get it if you take away a toy a child is playing with, or you forbid a child to do something he is bent on doing. . . . In general, the stimulus to anger and fighting is restraint or interference" (Woodworth). It seems that if any strong tendency to action is first aroused and then interfered with, anger and pugnacious behaviour are the instinctive results.

We all know some babies are more prone to anger than

others, and show this soon after birth. They may fly into rages directly they are awakened from sleep, or if their desire for something, such as a toy or food, is not satisfied immediately. On the other hand, some infants are quiet and placid, and adjust themselves calmly and easily to most of the demands of their environments. Some children, even in infancy, show strong desires. These are the youngsters who, if thwarted, will start the habit of screaming until they get what they want. Once a child discovers that his temper is a weapon by means of which he can force his mother, or any other person, to do as he wants, the habit of flying into a temper on the slightest provocation begins to develop. It is not at all unusual for that infantile habit to persist throughout the whole of the child's later life; and the worried parents often have no idea that they are largely responsible for the distressing characteristic because they have yielded to the baby's first temper tantrums.

It is sometimes said that a bad-tempered child inherits this quality from some member of the family. This is not necessarily the case, even should one of the parents be bad-tempered. All normal children have some tendency to anger, but it depends to a great extent upon the conditions of their early home life whether this becomes a habit or not. There are many things that can encourage temper and may convert a perfectly normal child into a consistently bad-tempered one.

If a child is not managed wisely, the normal tendency to anger may be aroused so often that it becomes a habit; whereas, had he been treated differently, this tendency may not have developed to anything like the same degree. If we are to avoid developing temper tantrums in children, we should have some understanding of the causes that are likely to arouse their anger. If we know these, we may not only prevent temper tantrums occurring, but should they have already developed we may be able to remove the cause and the bad habit may then disappear. Some of these

causes are physical in origin, others are psychological. The latter may be the result of certain tendencies in the child, or they may be due to conditions of his environment.

Physical Conditions

Children of all ages are more difficult to manage if the physical conditions of their lives are not right, as their health will, in some degree, be affected. Common physical causes are:

- A. 1. Lack of sufficient sleep.
2. Unsuitable sleeping conditions—e.g. closed windows, too few or too many bed-clothes.
3. Disturbed sleep due to worry or anxiety of any kind.
- B. 1. Incorrect diet (too much or too little food or badly balanced meals).
2. Being allergic to certain foods, such as fats, may be responsible for constant displays of temper.
- C. The child may be suffering from some physical complaint, such as worms; digestive or intestinal troubles, inflamed tonsils or adenoids. In the case of infants and toddlers temper may be due to on-coming teeth.
- D. Lack of sufficient vigorous activity or play during the day may have a detrimental effect on some children; whereas other children may be having too much exercise, as in the case of older children training for sport.
- E. Any sense defect may set up nervous strain, which may develop strong anger reactions—e.g. eyestrain or defective hearing.
- F. Illness often lessens emotional control, so that irritability may be one of the first indications that something is amiss.
- G. Uncomfortable clothing, such as tight coats or pants. Some over-anxious mothers try to protect

their children from colds, etc., by giving them too many layers of clothing. This does not protect the child but makes him more susceptible to changes of temperature through over-heating the body.

We should try to find out therefore whether the cause of the child's constant display of temper lies primarily in some physical condition.

Psychological Causes

The child himself. As was mentioned earlier, some children seem more prone to anger than others. This characteristic may be the result of certain natural tendencies which are very valuable in themselves, but which may become easily associated with anger. For example, if a child is very sensitive or has very strong desires, any frustration or opposition naturally arouses an emotional storm. Such a child should be managed tactfully but firmly, otherwise each day may see this tendency to anger so frequently aroused that it becomes a habit. If, however, he is guided wisely and the conditions that lead to anger are avoided as much as possible, the habit need not develop.

Some people think that this is giving in to the child, but it is not. The child is not aware of what is being done, so he cannot get the idea that he is being indulged. When a child is young we should try to prevent the constant awakening of anger. If, for example, a certain food or garment, or certain demands, always irritate the child, it is wise to avoid them for a definite period so that these opportunities for anger do not occur. Quite often such an interval causes the child to adopt a normal attitude when he again faces the situation. If, however, his reaction is the same, there may be some quite personal reason for his dislike, and it should, if possible, be respected. Some children, for instance, have an intense aversion for some colour, as many of us have, so that to wear a garment of that particular hue causes them acute distress. It is easy, under these circumstances, to dye

the garment. A little common sense and sympathy often make a compromise possible.

This does not mean that the child is to have all his whims indulged. If we have made certain that there is no good reason for his anger, the best thing is to try some means of inducing him to do willingly what is necessary, but if this does not succeed and it becomes a battle of wills, the parent should show himself the stronger of the two.

A child who is easily roused to anger needs above all else a calm and controlled home atmosphere and a great deal of understanding so that he is opposed and frustrated no more than is necessary. All children, however, need a certain amount of discipline if we are to give them any understanding of what is really right and wrong, whether they fly into temper tantrums or not. How this may be done with a minimum amount of resistance and anger was explained in *The Young Child and His Parents* in the chapter on "Constructive Discipline."

Imitation

There are, however, certain conditions that may increase a child's natural tendency to anger. None is more common than that of example. If a child is unfortunate enough to have an uncontrolled parent, or if there is any member of the household who is constantly flying into rages, example alone may stimulate the same habit in the child. Children are very suggestible, and if the primitive tendencies that lie in all of them are constantly stimulated, it is very difficult to teach them the control that civilisation and community living make necessary. It is so much easier to let anger burst out than to keep it in check. Parents who are continuously giving way to impatience and anger must expect a similar reaction in the child. All the preaching and punishment they may give will accomplish nothing against the force of their example. I remember once sitting on a jetty waiting for a ferry when a mother with two young children

came and sat beside me. I did not see what preceded the action of the small boy, who suddenly hit his smaller sister. But I did see the mother turn on him angrily and smack him hard as she remarked, "I'll teach you to hit your little sister!" This was exactly what she was doing, for the child's behaviour was undoubtedly an imitation of her own repeated outbursts.

We also know that when we happen to be nervy and irritable, children of all ages are always more difficult to manage. This is not entirely deliberate on their part but is due, in great measure, to their sensitiveness to our moods. In such cases a greater amount of self-control is often demanded from the children than the adults are themselves prepared to exercise.

Inability to Meet Failure

We all know people who react in childish ways in the face of obstacles or unexpected difficulties. Where the properly developed person is inspired to greater efforts the adult who, whatever his intellectual abilities, is still emotionally a child responds by giving up, sulking or getting in a rage. These characteristics are usually considered an inherent part of their temperaments; they are rarely seen as products of faulty upbringing or lack of proper training. Of course, children come into the world possessing varying degrees of sensitiveness. If, however, they are wisely brought up, childish forms of behaviour should not persist in any very marked degree after childhood has passed. Adults unknowingly do many things that influence children in undesirable ways. It is wrong, for instance, to teach any child to "hit the naughty floor" or the "naughty chair," because he has hurt himself against it, but it is particularly unwise if he happens to be one who is easily upset if things do not go as he wants. It is better when such a mishap occurs to make light of it. When he is older he should be helped to realise how it came about, especially if it were in any way his own

fault. We should be careful not to teach him to lay the blame on inanimate objects, on other people, or on bad luck. We should try to teach him to take responsibility for his own failures. It is a false kindness that prevents the child learning to face some of the inescapable realities of life.

What are we to do when the child falls into a rage as soon as he is frustrated in any way? This frequently occurs with children of all ages, and it even happens in the first year. It is, however, particularly likely to occur in the toddling stage, when the child is beginning to experiment with the things about him and to test his own power. This habit may be the result of different causes:

1. The child may be one of those mentioned earlier—he has strong desires and resents intensely any frustration, either through the natural difficulties of the task or through being interfered with or opposed.

2. He may have received so much praise for everything he has attempted, whether it demanded effort or not, that he always expects immediate success.

3. In the case of older children it may be partly due to fear aroused by constant criticism or by the demand of parents for standards beyond their ability.

4. The child's power to meet and cope with difficulties may be impaired by ill health or fatigue.

5. There may be disturbing factors in his environment, such as disharmony between parents, loss of a member of the family, or any conditions leading to nervous strain.

You can see that most of these causes suggest at any rate part of the cure. Remove the cause and the child will probably become more controlled and the spasms of temper become less frequent. It is wise, however, when a child flares up, to ignore the outburst for the moment, as he is certainly not in a fit state to listen to reason. It is better to wait a little or to try to distract his attention, if possible, and, when he has somewhat recovered his balance, to explain to him the

reason for his failure, at the same time suggesting or helping him to evolve some better method for carrying out his plans.

It is often effective to say, "I think you have been working at that too long. Put it away for a while and do something else and then come back to it." This frequently succeeds because the child's efforts to overcome this difficulty have made him mentally, if not physically, fatigued, and he is therefore incapable of success.

The child's anger is often aroused when we suggest failure to him if he wishes to attempt a new activity which we think is beyond his powers. It is often interesting to compare what a pre-school child will do quite capably at kindergarten with what he is allowed or expected to do at home. The average child can do much more than he is allowed to do in the home and the consequent sense of frustration is responsible for many exhibitions of temper. If we allow children to do what they wish we are often surprised at what they can achieve, not perfectly from an adult standpoint, but well for a child. Take, for example, the case of a small girl of five and a half who persistently wanted to use an electric iron. All persuasion failed to change her desire, so, one day, her mother acceded to her request. She was shown how to use the iron and, though it was heavy, she was able to iron some handkerchiefs quite well, and since then has ironed them for her mother every week.

If, as sometimes happens, the child fails as the adult anticipated, he will have had the experience that enables him to realise this for himself, and it should also increase his faith in his parents' judgment.

The child's desire for and need of first-hand experience is one of the most vital things for us to remember. This is true of children of all ages, but is particularly true of the younger child who, through inexperience, is incapable of understanding even half of our explanations. If parents happen to be so "managing" or so protective or so impatient that they do not allow the young people to try enough new experiences

for themselves, certain undesirable emotional attitudes are liable to develop. The children either refuse to make any effort, especially if there seems to be any chance of failure, or they become so resentful of the constant interference that chronic bad temper is the result. This is as true of the adolescent as of the pre-school child. We should remember that all normal children need the opportunity for independence and for testing their powers, both at home and at school. If this opportunity is not given they will, in most cases, take it for themselves. It is impossible for them always to succeed in what they undertake; so one of the most important jobs of parenthood is to teach them to accept their failures with courage, and to help them to realise that their failure should not be an excuse for the slackening of effort, but an opportunity for gaining more knowledge and a truer sense of their own powers.

Anger and the Older Child

As the child approaches school-age, we should realise that he is slowly maturing in mind and emotions as well as in body. We are conscious of his physical development because of his increased weight and height and his increasing number of skills. We are not always sufficiently aware of the more subtle changes that are taking place at the same time. Of course, he goes into a higher class at school, learns new subjects and is interested in a greater variety of things; but unfortunately for his emotional development, too much of his school time is taken up with mere memorising. He may learn his lessons quite satisfactorily, but, if he is an average child, he will not only have a feeling of boredom at the amount of seemingly useless stuff he is expected to learn, but a definite sense of frustration because of the lack of time and opportunity for using his own powers of thought and action. He is aware of the great world about him and the number of interesting things he would like to know. His desire for experimentation is intense, yet the average home

and school provide him with few opportunities for expressing these desires legitimately. He wants to make things, both useful and beautiful, yet this also he is denied. Is it any wonder, then, that so many school-children are bad-tempered, disobedient and rebellious?

If a child is to develop into a serene and happy adolescent he must, at every age, have his emotional needs satisfied. If this is not done he will show his sense of frustration in a variety of ways, and of these a tendency to quick or unreasoning anger is one of the most common. Over and over again we hear parents say their adolescent boys and girls are so difficult, so disobedient, so rude and bad-tempered. They blame the child and rarely realise that their problem is largely the result of his emotional starvation. The young people have minds but have not been taught to use them properly. They want opportunities for self-expression but have not been given them. Life seems more or less meaningless so they fight against it. But as life is too vague an opponent they fight against their parents and those, who, because of their authority, seem to hold power over life.

This does not mean that children should, at all times, be allowed to do as they please; for this does not spell happiness either for them, their parents, or the community. It does mean that the emotional needs of their natures should be understood and given an outlet under the wise and sympathetic guidance of parents and teachers. A truly happy home is one in which parents and children live together in mutual love and respect. If the children have definite personalities there must be occasional conflicts between them and the adults, but these should be the exception and not, as is unhappily so often the case, a daily if not an hourly occurrence.

(c) FEAR

One of the most interesting cases of child-study is that dealing with the fears of childhood, for they embrace a very

wide field and appear in many different forms. A parent sometimes says that there exists no fear problem with her child, yet on investigation we may find that the child tells lies, or is given to overmuch day-dreaming, that he boasts or bullies other children, or does not like attempting new things; he may be given to over-anxiety, bed-wetting; may be jealous, have nightmares, play truant, walk in his sleep, etc., yet all of these forms of behaviour may be symptoms of fear, expressing themselves differently according to the cause and to the temperament of the child.

Fears can be classified in two ways. There are *objective* fears, such as fears of darkness, animals, policeman, the dentist, etc.; and *subjective* fears. The latter may be the result of an active imagination, or of some situation or condition of the child's life which has aroused fear as a general attitude, without it being necessarily associated with any particular object or experience. These subjective fears may affect the child's whole personality and attitude to life. Objective fears are much easier to deal with and much less important than subjective fears, because they are so obvious, and because the reason for the fear is usually nearer the surface and is limited to only one set of circumstances. The more widely diffused fear, however, that affects the child's whole or a large part of his personality, presents a more serious problem and usually requires a good deal of time and patience before it can be overcome.

Is Fear Inherited?

It is generally accepted today that fears are not inherited but are conditioned through the influence of environment. This does not mean that the capacity for fear is not inherited. It is, but not fear of any specific thing. I came across this sentence once which sums up the position: "Fear we do not learn, but we learn what to fear." In each one of us there exists from birth the capacity for feeling fear. Some of us, fortunately, have had it stimulated so little that it is not an

outstanding factor in our lives; others, however, are either more sensitive or have been made afraid so often that they carry the burden of fear with them always; and for those with psychological understanding this is obvious in their attitudes and behaviours. The people who are very aggressive, who suffer from lack of self-confidence, who are nervous, neurotic, over-anxious, or who are always on the defensive are a few of those who carry into adult life the fruits of what, in most cases, have been childhood fears. Not infrequently we hear it said that a child fears the dark, or dogs, because it has inherited the fear from one of its parents. It is quite forgotten that children are extremely sensitive to the attitudes of those about them and that these so-called inherited fears have been built into the children through their contact, after birth, with those who possess them.

In his interesting experiments with new-born infants Watson found that at birth the child showed fear under two circumstances only: when a sudden loud noise was made near his head, and when he was thrown off his balance or lost his support. Watson was quite convinced, after numberless tests, that there is not any inborn fear of such things as furry animals, snakes, frogs, fire, total darkness, and so on.

Conditioning Fear

Watson described how he conditioned a baby to fear a white rabbit, by striking an iron bar near his head each time the rabbit was given to him, and that at last the child did not need the noise to show every sign of fear directly the rabbit came within sight. After this the child would probably show fear of all furry animals, of a woman's muff—even, perhaps, of Santa Claus because of his beard. So it is that many of the child's fears arise not because of any fear of the thing itself, but because of some factor associated with some former experience. For example, a child does not fear a

quiet dog, but if the dog in its friendliness jumps at him so that he suddenly topples (remember loss of balance is a natural fear), or if it suddenly barks, these two factors will arouse the child's innate fear, and the animal responsible is dreaded ever after, and probably all other dogs as well. Children are not afraid of lightning, but they are afraid of the claps of thunder which accompany it. So it is that the average child is not naturally afraid of the dark, but he is conditioned to fear it by various occurrences associated with it. This particularly interesting problem I shall deal with at some length later.

Common Fears of Childhood

What are the most common fears of childhood? In her book, *Difficulties of Child Development*, Mary Chadwick lists the following: "To be alone, of the dark, strangers, animals; dogs in the town and cows and bulls in the country; snakes, loud noises, things that may burst; fire; water in which they may be drowned; thunder, mice, little things, fur or feathers: being shut in anywhere, especially a dark cupboard; being lost or eaten; bogies, witches, ghosts, policemen, doctors or hospitals." . . . In all these fears we can see that experience is responsible, with the exception of loud noises. It is the pain caused by fire, the sudden noise of things that burst, the pain associated with doctors, that have aroused their fear. Sometimes the fear is carried over to a secondary thing, as was the case with a small boy who showed no fear of going to a doctor, and behaved quietly and normally the whole time. Later he had to have adenoids and tonsils removed, and saw the doctor in his white coat ready for the operation. He made no fuss, but had some very unhappy days with his sore throat. About three months afterwards he had to go to another doctor and was quite at ease until the doctor put on a white coat, when the little lad was seized with a panic of fear, so that the visit was useless.

Threats

A cause of fear in many children is the making of foolish threats, by which means a weak, impatient or non-understanding adult tries to gain obedience. The child is threatened with the policeman, with a dog that will come and bite him if he won't eat his pudding, and so on. The folly of using such threats lies in the fact that the child believes them. Even if he does what he refused to do at first, fear of specific things has been created in him. I shall never forget a sight I once saw—a policeman standing on one corner of the street, and a small boy of about three shrieking and clinging to his mother in the most abject terror I have ever seen. The little chap had evidently been told that the policeman would take him away for some reason. Think of the effect on the child of such a method of enforcing obedience. Years ago a policeman told me that the police have a most trying time with numbers of lost children, who are in a panic when taken to the police-station. On the other hand, a mother told me some time ago of her small boy who was found by the police wandering from home, and when she went to the station he was having such a marvellous time with the policemen, who were playing with him and had given him ice-cream, etc., that he did not want to leave his new friends. *A safe principle to follow is never, under any circumstances, to arouse a child's fear in relation to anything that may be of future use or benefit to him.*

Children are threatened in these ways also: "Wait till you get to school; the teacher will use the stick if you don't do as you are told!" or, "If you don't take this medicine, I'll get the doctor and he'll have to hurt you!" or, in the case of little boys who wet themselves or handle their genital organs, "If you don't stop that, I'll get the doctor to come and cut it off!" The child naturally believes what he is told, and when he has to go to school, or to a doctor, it is not surprising that he is terrified.

Another threat is, "I'll go away and get another little boy," so that the child has no sense of security. If the child finds one day that the mother has gone out without telling him previously, threats will send him into a panic lest she should not return. There is also the threat, "I'll tell father!" which is bad from every point of view. It makes the father's return home a constant dread instead of a pleasure to both himself and the child, and if *it occurs with any frequency* it destroys all chance of friendship or love between father and child.

Adults must realise that threats like these, made in irritation or anger, can be forgotten by the adult but not by the child, who, however, does not necessarily remember the words used, but only the impression they aroused. We know ourselves how often we retain the impression or general idea of a conversation or experience without any clear recollection of it in detail. Such impressions, left by the threats that seem to endanger the child's security, may last a life-time, and probably explain many of the irrational fears of later adult-life. They are also responsible for many cases of night terrors, enuresis (both day and night wetting) and general nervous instability or irritability. We must also remember that threats are generally used by irritable, uncontrolled or neurotic parents or teachers, and so the child's trouble lies in the weakness of their control of themselves, as well as in their lack of understanding of the child. Of course, it is very difficult always to be self-controlled, but parents and teachers should try to avoid the use of threats as a means of child-management. If they are believed, the effect is bad for the child; if they are not believed, the child loses respect for the adult.

Fear of the Dark

There are many reasons why fear of the dark is easily aroused. First of all there may be a sort of latent racial fear, product of the thousands of years when darkness held many

terrors and unknown dangers for man. Wild beasts, terrible storms, unrecognised and terrifying noises lurked in the darkness of the night, the forest, the caves. Only after thousands of years of existence on earth did man discover the use of fire so that much of his fear could be overcome. That this terror of darkness lies hidden in our unconscious is accepted by many psychologists, but not by all. If it be so, then the child's natural individual fear would be built upon a deeper hidden fear. So it is our job, as far as possible, to avoid creating situations that may arouse it. Once fear has been aroused it haunts the mind unconsciously and may come to the surface not only in behaviour, but in disturbed sleep, in dreams and anxiety states, the cause for which is frequently unknown.

When these dreams take the form of nightmares, which may be based upon many kinds of experience, they frequently have the effect of arousing in the child fear of the dark. Imagine a young child waking up at night with all the sickening physical reactions of fear—beating heart, irregular breathing, sweat. As is the common experience of adults, he may not remember the details of the dream, only that he has just passed through a terrible experience. The adult knows it was a dream, to the young child it is a reality, an experience that has taken place in the darkness in which he awoke. Is it any wonder that he may refuse in future to go to bed in the dark or to go into a dark room?

If the child happens to have any physical trouble—e.g. digestive troubles, worms, infected tonsils or adenoids, anything in fact that interferes with his functional well-being—bad dreams are liable to result. The child's health, therefore, must be examined if he is suffering in this way. But this does not explain why the dreams take the forms they do. Psychological factors are involved as well.

Other situations that are liable to cause this trouble are terrifying stories, especially near bed-time—stories of wild animals, giants and dragons, of crime, or perilous adventure,

etc., such as are heard through some of the broadcasting stations in the children's sessions. Exciting games played with or by father, in which he pretends he is a wild animal and will eat the child up, can over-excite him, and even though he may encourage his father because there is a certain fascination in the fear, such games at bed-time are altogether bad.

A very important source of night-terrors is one that few people understand. It arises from housing and other conditions leading to children having to share their parents' bedroom. Though they may not witness incidents in the intimate life of their parents, nevertheless they frequently wake and lie silent, terrified of something mysterious that is taking place in the darkness and which they cannot understand. If they should call out and are scolded, this adds to their distress; or if they are told that nothing is happening, they know it is a lie, and then to their fear of the unknown is added loss of faith in their parents. This particular situation has been responsible for many problems of neurosis and undesirable sex attitudes in adult life.

How to Overcome Fear of the Dark

If fear has been aroused, what is to be done about it? First of all, if there is any known cause that can be removed, this should be removed at once, so that the fear is no longer being built up.

Secondly—never comment upon the fear in the child's presence and never tease him or allow others to tease him about it. He does not want to be a "coward" or a "baby," he simply *cannot* help it. Remember the number of adults who will not stay alone at night, who imagine all kinds of things are happening in the house, even though their reason tells them they are behaving foolishly. *The child is less capable than an adult of controlling fear, so he should never be made ashamed, because, if he represses his fear, the result may be symptoms worse than dreams.* Our job is to build up

the child's confidence, to help him to feel as well as know that there is nothing for him to fear. This can be done in quite a number of ways, a few of which are as follows:

1. Take the child with you into a dark room or outside, holding his hand. Avoid saying, "Don't be frightened." Keep the idea of fear away from him as much as you can.

2. Tell the child how night is the time for rest for flowers, animals, etc., as well as for children and grown-ups, so that they may grow strong and beautiful. Show him the quiet beauty of the moon and stars. Let him notice the scent of flowers, and if he is old enough to be interested, show him the flowers in the evening and again in the morning, so that he may notice their growth during the night.

3. If he wants a light in his bedroom let him have it—either a light from a low-powered lamp, or from the hall, his door being left open. Make no fuss about it, so that having a light is accepted as the usual thing, and the reason for it may eventually be forgotten. After a time it may be suggested that big children give up lights, and that he can say when he is big enough to go to bed without it. An electric torch under the pillow or beside the bed has had an excellent effect on some children, who use it quite a lot for a night or two, and then even forget to ask for it when getting into bed.

4. If a child wants the parent to sit beside his bed, this may be done for a few nights only, because it is very bad for a child to be conditioned to a state of dependence upon the presence of another human being. The following method is often effectual: Stay by the bed for a few nights, but do not hold the child's hand or touch him in any way. A couple of nights later, stay in the room (which has a low light), but move about very quietly, finding things to do. In this way the child becomes accustomed to not having anyone immediately at the bedside. After a few nights, leave the room for a moment, coming back almost immediately so that the child does not

lose his sense of security, and then each succeeding night gradually lengthen the time of absence. In the end the child is content to sleep quite alone. This method acted well in the case of a child of eleven years who was afraid to sleep alone for months after she had been awakened in the middle of the night when a fire had broken out in the house.

5. One child eight years of age, of a particularly sensitive imaginative type, had such constant bad dreams that she became terrified, not so much of the dark as of going to bed. It was suggested that she should try making up her own dreams, by thinking of all the lovely things she would like to dream about as soon as she got into bed. At the end of a month the cure had taken effect. We know how much more liable to bad dreams people are when they are worried. Their last waking thoughts are anxious and troubled, and this attitude is carried over to the unconscious, which is most active in sleep. So with this child—the ugly worrying things which had no basis in her own life, but which were the results of hearing and reading unsuitable fairy-tales and stories about burglars, etc., were pushed out by her own creative thoughts, and later this dream-making was developed into an interest in writing stories.

Fear Due to Sense of Insecurity

Another common cause of fear is a sense of insecurity, a cause that is not often realised by adults. You may be growing tired of my constant reference to this point, but it is so fundamental, appears so often as the basis of behaviour problems, that it is impossible to avoid it.

The sense of insecurity can be aroused in quite a number of ways. These I shall refer to very briefly.

1. Inability to compete physically or mentally with other members of the family or with other children of a similar age. With one type of child the result will show in over-anxiety, causing him to attempt work and play beyond his

capacity so that a nervous breakdown may occur after a period of intense irritability. With other children the fear of failure will completely inhibit their powers, so that they cannot do even as much as they are capable of doing. In other cases it will lead to cheating.

2. Criticism, ridicule, constant fault-finding will have the same effect, leading often to lying, disobedience, destructiveness, truancy, as well as other nervous troubles such as nail-biting, facial tics or grimaces, nervous twitchings of the body, etc.

3. Threats that the parents may leave him; uncertainty of their love when he sees how much attention is paid to a new baby; favouritism towards other children in the family; being ignored by visitors who take notice of other children may lead to similar symptoms.

4. Over-severe or too frequent punishment.

5. Fear of the father is a frequent cause of neurosis in adults as well as children. In adults it is, of course, the product of the child's fear that was so deeply ingrained that it persists even though childhood is passed. It may express itself in abnormal states of anxiety, dread of God and of punishment in a future life; fear of failure and anticipations of lurking dangers, as well as a resistance to all accepted authority. It may also be expressed by the adoption of a similar attitude of coercive authority in adult life towards his or her own child and to those in positions of inferiority.

6. A fear that plays havoc with some lives is that due to coddling and petting, so that the child grows up fearing the effects of all kinds of things on his health. The only child and the youngest child are frequent victims of this type of fear, due to the over-anxiety of parents. Parents should not discuss the child's health in front of him, even if it is not of the best; not only is it liable to make him nervous about himself, and in this way bring about the very conditions he fears, but it gives him an excellent weapon for getting his own way and dominating his parents by playing on their fears for him.

How to Avoid or Cure Fear

Such are some of the most usual sources of fear. What is to be done, since so many things that are quite beyond our power to control may occur to arouse it? We cannot do the impossible, but we should try to avoid creating any situations that may induce fear, either directly or indirectly. We need to use common sense in dealing with it, once it has been aroused. Avoid giving the child any feeling of guilt or shame because he is afraid, for such a method results very often not in the overcoming of the fear, but the mere repression of it, and the development of a sense of guilt. Many children and adults who seem fearless and live dangerously, doing in consequence the most foolish and foolhardy things, behave in this way simply because it enables them to hide from others, and sometimes from themselves, that they are afraid.

I have helped children to overcome fear of strange creatures or dogs, by inducing them to become interested in them. One small boy of three years had been terrified of a frog. By holding the frog in my hand, I at last persuaded him to touch the "poor cold frog" with the tip of his finger while he stood some distance away. Then I got another child to jump like a frog, which amused the little chap very much. Then we watched the frog jump about, and when I caught it again he came close to it without any signs of fear. Another small boy of the same age was afraid of dogs, so I persuaded the parents to buy him a tiny puppy. This also had the desired effect.

But sometimes the cure is not quick or easy. If the cause of the fear lies in some forgotten experience, it may need the skilled treatment of a psychiatrist to overcome it.

Generally speaking, we may say that if the child is surrounded by an atmosphere of understanding love, if his parents avoid the many foolish words and acts that are prone to cause fear and that can easily be controlled, if the

child is given plenty of freedom but wise guidance, and if his health is good, then fear should play a very small part in his life, and if it should arise, the circumstances of his upbringing should prevent it from having any permanent effect.

No matter how wisely parents may have guarded their children from the development of any unnecessary fear, there is always the possibility that some child or foolish adult may, in one moment, undo all the good work of years. This, of course, only occurs with the younger children. At kindergarten or school their companions tell them hair-raising stories of burglars, bogeymen, ghosts or even murders. The first indications the parents often have of what has occurred is that the child suddenly develops a fear of the dark, or is afraid to go into the house or garden alone. Without pressing the child too much, or making him too conscious of the fact that there is something unusual in his behaviour, it is well to question him casually as to the stories he has been hearing at school or from people he has recently met. The child generally mentions the cause of the trouble and thus gives the parents an opportunity to overcome the fear by some simple explanation. In most cases the children have only the vaguest ideas as to what burglars and ghosts are; but they have been made to feel that they are some kind of terrifying experience. Should the explanation not have the desired effect, the situation should then be met in the ways mentioned earlier.

The foregoing has probably helped you to realise how important it is that we should consider the effects of fear upon the child's life. Some fear may develop situations that are a nuisance to the parents, but the first consideration should be the effect upon the child himself. We should never forget that the child who is often afraid, to whom fear has become a constant accompaniment to living, will ultimately lose much of his power to do things well, and to live happily, because fear is the most destructive of all human emotions.

CHAPTER V

INFLUENCE OF EMOTION ON THE CHILD'S IMAGINATION

IN normal childhood imagination plays a very great part. If children are to be happy, their imaginative needs must be met by the provision of suitable play materials and materials for occupations such as drawing, modelling, building, etc., and by stories, pictures, songs and many other things. At every stage of development, from the pre-school years onwards, this is equally true, though the forms demanded at each age naturally vary. If the child's imaginative needs are not satisfied in the right way, he will find his own solutions, though he may not have any idea as to what is urging him on. As a school child and adolescent he may find some outlet in the less desirable songs, pictures and books that the shops provide; and it may also lead him, as it leads the pre-school child, into various forms of undesirable behaviour.

One child I know, whose parents definitely discouraged imagination in the form of phantasy, who was allowed only "true" and "good" books, began to steal. Other children make up their own stories and pass them off as true and are called "little liars." Still other children find themselves unable to amuse themselves, because they do not know how to play. Once two small girls, who had lived "outback" and had been physically well cared for but otherwise left alone, came to my kindergarten. They were the most pathetic couple I have ever seen, for they did nothing but stand about, each holding a doll in her arms. I had to stimulate the young minds through stories, pictures and songs, by going walks and looking at shop windows and street life; by teaching them how to draw and build and play. It was a slow

and difficult job, but at the end of three months they were much more normal. It is only in imaginative play of some kind that the average child can express all those personal qualities that make for "his fullest development as an individual and as a social being."

THE CHILD'S PHANTASY-LIFE

There is one aspect of the child's imaginative life about which the average parent knows little if anything, namely the inner meaning and significance of the child's phantasy, as shown in dramatic play, in stories and in his art. This aspect of the child's life, opened before us only of recent years, is one of extraordinary interest. In much of the child's imaginings there is something deeper involved than the pleasure of the moment; he is usually expressing, quite unconsciously, certain emotional attitudes, certain ideas he cannot express in any other way. When we examine the subject, the characters and situations introduced into the child's stories, his murmured talks to toys and animals, his day-dreams and his play, we often find that, despite apparent differences, there may be certain elements which reappear over and over again. Once we have discovered this underlying similarity we may find a clue to certain psychological difficulties in the child's life, to certain difficulties of behaviour. We may, for example, find that in play, drawing and stories of young children, deaths or accidents are always introduced. To whom do these things occur? If on analysis we find it is to "story" or "dramatised" parents, it shows that antagonism towards them is definitely felt by the child, even though he may be affectionate and obedient in his daily life; if the accident or death occurs to himself it indicates that he feels uncertain and insecure.

What may have caused these feelings? Are the parents hard, too dominating, too critical and interfering, or too protective? Any of these attitudes must arouse the child's resistance. Is he unhappy because he feels inferior to brothers

or sisters, to some child or children at school? In his play-activities of different kinds, as well as in his dreams, the child unconsciously expresses his anxiety and distress. The average person regards the child's recurring ideas of death, accident, tragedy to others or to himself as an indication of morbidity, but it is more than this. We need to understand something of the child's tendency to think in symbols, if we are to remove the cause of his unhappiness, the clue to which is given in his play.

THE SYMBOLISM OF PHANTASY

A frequent comment upon the play of younger children is that they love whipping and punishing other children, even though they are never, or rarely, treated in this way themselves. This is understandable, however, when we consider that every child knows he is in the power and under the control of these (to him) gigantic and physically powerful grown-ups, who know so much, and can do so much more than he can. He wants to get rid of that very constant sense of inferiority, and can do it temporarily by indulging in the phantasy of being himself an adult. Being immature he can express his desire for power only in primitive ways, through physical domination. The more frequent is this play and the more tyrannical the young actor, the more it indicates his feeling of oppression.

WISH-FULFILMENT

This also gives some hint as to the popularity of acting cowboys, Red Indians, burglars, etc. All these symbolise successful strength and the mastery over constituted authority in some form; consequently the child finds in this play satisfaction and healing for his sense of inferiority, and also for his frequently unconscious desire to get rid of "these people" who dominate him. It is better that he should "play out" his resentment in this imaginative form, than that it should be expressed in anti-social behaviour such as

stealing, lying, destructiveness, cruelty, or general unmanageableness. Children have no more understanding of the forces that lie behind their wrong-doing than they have of the motives that urge them to play cowboys, bushrangers, pirates and Indians.

The day-dreams of children, expressed in written stories or in those told to other children, in dramatic play and in reveries, are also symbolic of many unsatisfied desires. The child who is physically weak will make up stories of boys or girls who have performed marvellous feats of physical endurance, of courage or prowess in adventure or in the field of games. The lad who is useless as a cricketer or a footballer will compensate for his sense of inferiority by imagining himself as "saving his side" in some important match and being chaired and cheered as he knows will never happen to him in real life. The plain, shy girl will make up stories of a beautiful princess, adored by all, or of some shy Cinderella, whose real beauty of face and character are ultimately appreciated by a handsome prince. Or she is a great actress or dancer who wins the plaudits of the crowd. Then there is the phantasy of dying in the service of some loved person who was unconscious of the hero's or heroine's devotion until it was "too late." All this imaginative play, whether it be in word or action, symbolises some strong emotional need of which the child himself is not always conscious, and which he cannot express in any other satisfactory way.

This symbolism is shown in many other forms and in many disguises. The sense of frustration through weakness, through the favouritism shown to another child, through the rivalry of contemporaries; the resentment against the high standard of conduct demanded by parents and teachers; the rebellion against the limitations and monotony of their lives; the distress of unrequited love and unsatisfied ambition, all find expression in the child's imagination.

Sometimes it is possible to discover problems where none seem to exist. For example: a child of five went to kinder-

garten; the mother was a good mother and devoted to the child, who was obviously well cared for. Soon after his arrival the teacher realised that all the child's phantasies were of destruction. His play with blocks always ended with a vicious knocking down of what he had previously constructed. His drawing was always of a house falling or burning down, a bomb bursting and killing people, a train or motor-car accident, etc. The colours used in his drawing were always scarlet, orange and sometimes black. On investigation, the teacher found that the child's father was a drunkard who ill-treated him and his mother. On another occasion, a small boy came to school and explained his absence the previous two days by saying that his father had been knocked down and killed by a tram and he had gone to the funeral. The next day the teacher went to pay a visit of sympathy to the mother and discovered that the father was alive, but that the accident had occurred to another man in the same street. The story, however, was a wish-fulfilment on the child's part, for this father also was a drunkard and treated the small boy brutally. The child's desire to be rid of this hated parent was the natural stimulus for his story.

THE DREAMER

Then there is the "dreamer," the child who is always "in the clouds." Sometimes he may give an indication of what is troubling him, but usually he tells nothing. A certain amount of day-dreaming is normal to the more imaginative type of children, but the tendency to indulge in it too often may be a definite indication that he is finding reality unpleasant or unsatisfactory and is escaping into a better world. Sometimes such an attitude is accompanied by significant action on the part of the child. He or she will hide while the dream is in progress. He will climb on to the branch of a tree, hide in "a cubby," in an attic or unused room, in a hidden part of the garden, in a cupboard; or he may actually cover him-

self over with a rug or papers so that the world may be cut off entirely. This attitude often develops after the birth of another child, when the elder feels he is no longer wanted, so he builds up a refuge in his mind and lives his life in an imaginary kingdom where he realises his heart's desire. The story of Peter Pan is a perfect phantasy, symbolising the most common unconscious wishes and unfulfilled desires of childhood.

We should have no fear that the possession of imagination is dangerous to the child. It is dangerous only when the conditions of his life are such that he loses his interest in reality. Scolding and ridicule are useless as methods for changing this, since they intensify the child's unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Find out what has gone wrong and then help the child to feel that life is really worth living.

You may have the impression that all the child's imaginative play is the result of something adverse in his life. This is true in a measure, but it is not always preventable. No matter how ideal the conditions under which he lives, he must often feel small, ignorant, helpless, often bewildered and frustrated. Imaginative play, whether in dramatic games, drawing, stories, constructive work, etc., is his most normal and wholesome outlet. Each child should, therefore, have every encouragement in these ways. As he grows older he will still need an outlet for his emotions, not always as an avenue of escape from an unsatisfactory world, but as an avenue of expression for his personality. *Happy children must have their phantasies as well as the unhappy ones; "but the eagerness and emotion that attend them in the unhappy child will show a like comparison between a normally hungry child eating a bun and the ravenous speed with which one that is famished will do so. No one could confuse the phantasy-making of an emotionally starved child with that of the one who evolves them for the sheer joy of using the creative faculty of phantasy."* The child who uses his phantasy is, in his own way, an artist.

We see, therefore, that Imagination plays an integral part

in the child's emotional life and that, while it has its place in normal happy childhood, it is even more important as a safety-valve through which the unhappy or unsatisfied child can work out many of his emotional problems, or at least find a temporary escape.

CONCLUSION

Imagination, however, should play an important part in normal living. Every child should be encouraged to develop his imagination, for it is the key to the enjoyment of the most satisfying and permanent things of life, things which some few can create, but which all of us can learn to enjoy. Children should have opportunities for learning to love literature, music, dancing, arts and crafts, and the beauties of nature; and each will then find some avenue of interest which may last as long as life itself. In some cases, however, appreciation will stimulate a power of creativeness of which they had not dreamed. This creativeness may not bring them fame, but it will give them an emotional satisfaction so deep that it becomes in itself a good reason for living. This is surely a boon to those who live in a mechanised world, and whose work, bound by routine and repetition, has little room for the play of imagination which is, in its essence, a part of our innermost selves.

CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPING A WELL-ADJUSTED CHILD

WHAT is meant by a well-adjusted child? It implies a child who faces life with confidence (but not with aggressiveness) and who makes his social contacts happily. There are in the world a very large number of people, both adults and children, who do neither. When we study the adults about us, we see many of them are maladjusted. Some are full of fear, fear of themselves, and of their ability to do things successfully. Others are confident enough in this way, but are fearful of people, are sure they are not liked, that they are not wanted. Others we find who are over-confident and aggressive both in their self-reliance and in their approach to others. We find people with "one-track minds" and "fixed ideas" who must always return to the one subject, and who show the most amazing ability for steering all conversation towards this end. There are people who dislike their own sex, but like the opposite one; while others like their own sex only. There are those who are always "arguing" and "agin' the government" while others have developed into "Yes-men," who apparently have no minds of their own. There are scatter-brains and neurotics; there are people who "fly off the handle" at the slightest provocation, and disagreeable people who believe the worst of everyone and look always for an ulterior motive behind every act. There are people who can never stand alone, who are always asking advice but who may, however, never act upon it when it is given; and there are the irritating folk who must always interfere with others and show them "a better way." We could add to this list many other "queer" people, who have definite peculiarities that show faulty intellectual or distorted emotional

habits that are not conducive to true happiness or real success.

How did all these habits arise? What were their beginnings? Are they personal peculiarities that are inherent in the individual's make-up? Or are they indications that something went wrong in the individual's upbringing? Could they have been avoided if, as children, they had been better understood and guided with greater wisdom?

NEED FOR UNDERSTANDING CAUSES OF MALADJUSTMENT

Maladjustment in later life is often the result of the misguidance or distortion of normal characteristics of early childhood. It is natural for the young child to show such qualities as selfishness and egotism while he is in a state of immaturity and inexperience, because he is governed at first by primitive impulses. He can learn to control these only as he realises the effect of his conduct on the attitudes of others towards him and his freedom of action. "Maladjustment of children should be considered merely as stages in the process of learning to mature. Treated in this manner they lead to integrated adult life. Treated incorrectly they may become fixed into habits that manifest themselves as permanent pathological maladjustment" (Morgan). For this reason the attempt to force a small child to be unselfish when he is still in his stage of self-centred immaturity may lead to rebellion against all altruistic action in the future. We let a child crawl before he walks, no matter how grubby he gets. If we force him to walk too soon he becomes bandy-legged. We can damage children mentally and emotionally as well as physically by premature demands.

What are the fundamental causes of a child's maladjustment? There are many, some physical, some psychological; some may arise from conditions existing in the child himself, others from conditions in his environment. Unfortunately, it is often difficult for parents to understand and treat emotional disturbances because they are without the training

needed to give even an elementary knowledge of the laws governing human nature, and child nature in particular. In childhood many signs are given of dangerous trends which, if ignored or unnoticed, may later develop into most undesirable habits of thought or feeling. For example, a child was sent to school who was much smaller for his age than the others in his class. His lack of inches caused much teasing from his comrades and amused comments from adults, and developed in him such a strong feeling of inferiority that he began to show all kinds of undesirable symptoms—rages, boasting, and a delight in plaguing the other boys. The parents were most concerned at his apparent deterioration, and punishment given both at home and at school did not improve matters. Fortunately the parents thought of consulting a psychologist, who soon detected the cause. When the situation was explained, parents and teachers arranged matters so that the boy was helped to gain a sense of his own personal worth by successful accomplishment. He was given responsibility, and was told stories of great men who had been small in stature, e.g. Napoleon, Nelson and Wellington. Visitors to the house were asked to cease commenting on his size. At the end of a year the change was very marked—an unhappy, morose, unpleasant little boy had become happy, confident and normal.

It is impossible to stress too frequently that when the child shows any signs of bad or undesirable adjustments to others, these must be regarded as symptoms of some unhealthy condition in his life. It is imperative in all such cases to try to get back to the cause; for if we direct our attention only to the symptom, great harm may be done; and though the symptom may disappear it may, on the other hand, be intensified or give place to other symptoms equally undesirable. Instead of thinking "what can I do to make the child stop doing-so-and-so?" we should try to find the cause and ask ourselves "why is he behaving like this?" Much of the futility of punishment

lies in its disregard for the underlying cause of the child's behaviour.

PHYSICAL CAUSES OF MALADJUSTMENT

Ill health, whether temporary or chronic, must affect the child mentally and emotionally as well as physically. It is well known that the onset of any illness is often shown by irritability, bad temper, the refusal to make any effort. A child has often been punished for bad behaviour, and the parents or teachers have later been distressed to realise that this was really an indication of some physical upset. A case in point is that of a short-sighted child who became a delinquent because of unjust punishment given him for faults such as carelessness and laziness which were actually caused by his unrecognised sense defect. Hyper-thyroidism (too much thyroid), hypo-thyroidism (too little), as well as glandular imbalance of all kinds, affect the child not only physically, but in his behaviour and attitudes to others. Likewise, anæmia, tuberculosis and other pathological disturbances may have the same result.

In all cases of persistent social and intellectual maladjustment a medical examination should be made, in order to determine first of all whether there is a physical basis for the trouble. On the other hand, undesirable behaviour may be the product of a past illness such as meningitis, infantile paralysis, or constant ill health, which has not only affected the nervous tissue, but has been responsible for certain habits of thinking and feeling almost inevitably induced by invalidism. All mothers have experienced the difficulty of bringing a child back to normal behaviour after any prolonged or serious illness.

There are certain obvious physical conditions which are often accompanied by behaviour problems not recognised as having any connection with the illness. The child who is very over-grown, the child who is very under-sized, the very fat or the very thin child, the child who is over-active or

sluggish, who shows incongruous or very premature sexual characteristics, a precocious or retarded puberty, the regression to infantile habits of speech or behaviour, should also be medically examined, because the behaviour difficulties may have their basis in the abnormal physical conditions existing in the child. Many a stout child is punished for laziness, when the cause of his fault lies in his lack of glandular balance, or incorrect diet.

OTHER CAUSES

Having dealt very briefly with some of the common physical causes for the development of a maladjusted child, we shall now try to discover the other than physical conditions necessary for the development of the well-adjusted child. Physical conditions alone are not responsible for all cases of maladjustment, since a great many of them are due to *misunderstanding and mismanagement*. *What the child needs more than anything else, if he is to be well adjusted, is a sense of security. He needs to feel that he lives in a home where those he loves understand and love him. He needs faith in them and confidence in the belief that they, in their turn, have faith in him.* The beginning of maladjustment may arise very early through the parents' lack of knowledge of the best ways of approaching children and through their trying in wrong ways to get the children to do the right things. When mistakes have already been made, much may be done to help the child towards a more satisfactory adjustment; but it may take a long time, a great deal of patience and the ability to maintain faith in the child's ultimate power to make good in spite of lapses.

IMPORTANCE OF SUCCESS

First of all we must recognise that understanding causes of maladjustment does not mean that we must fold our hands, nod our head and say, "Alas! What a pity! It isn't the child's fault!" and then proceed to be softly sympathetic. Life is

beset with difficulties, and unless the child is helped to meet these with intelligence and, as he grows older, with a sense of moral principle, he must fail. We must therefore set the child on the way to both physical and moral strength, so that he may succeed in what he undertakes. He must at the same time learn to face failure with courage. It is in keeping or not keeping the right balance between success and failure that the character of the child's adjustments to life is largely determined. A child who never fails will become arrogant and unsympathetic, the child who never succeeds will become, at the best, timid and dull; at the worst, anti-social.

Every child should experience the joy of success, both in achievement and in personal relations. Unless he does so, he cannot build up the sense of security and personal worth that is necessary for mental health. Watch the face of a tiny child trying to fit a lid on a tin. The concentration accompanying his efforts is of infinite value. He tries this way and that, not with any definite plan, and by this method of trial and error ultimately succeeds. His expression registers his immense satisfaction, and he immediately starts to repeat the performance. He makes fewer and fewer unsuccessful attempts, and at last can put the lid on without effort. Having achieved this, his interest in the activity wanes, and he looks around for something else to do.

Experiences such as these are of great importance, and we should avoid interrupting them except when absolutely necessary. When we allow a child to continue in infancy his trial-and-error efforts until he brings them to a successful conclusion, we are laying the foundation for important mental habits. Not only is the child gaining increasing skill and knowledge, but he is also developing a habit of mind that impels him to continue whatever he sets out to do, overcoming any difficulties until he has brought his task to a successful issue. Adults have a bad habit of interrupting children of all ages in their play. Assuming that their needs

are of much greater importance than the child's, they call him to do this and that, to run messages, etc., not realising that to him play has all the significance and seriousness that work has for them.

Children whose activities are constantly interfered with, frequently become incapable of concentration and consequently never learn to overcome difficulties. Their self-respect, therefore, cannot demand any high standard of achievement. It is absurd to blame them later for a weakness that has been created for them. If it is imperative that the child should leave his play, we can often warn him that he must do so in a few moments, and this allows him to arrange his plans to meet the situation. If the child's natural desire to continue what he is doing to its end is disregarded, undesirable attitudes are developed towards those in authority which show in various disagreeable ways such as disobedience, unwillingness, resentment and deliberate opposition. The problem when and how obedience should be expected naturally arises here, but was treated fully in the chapter on "Constructive Discipline" in *The Young Child and His Parents*.

In bringing up children, parents and teachers should have as one of their main objectives the development of the child's faith in himself through the habit of success. To do this wisely it is necessary to know the capacity of each child so that we may not expect too much or too little. If we expect too much, the result is hopelessness and despair for the child, or frequently an ultimate nervous breakdown at secondary-school age consequent upon his putting forward more effort than his nervous system can stand. If we expect too little, the result is mental or physical laziness and dependence. We must beware of taking the child's age in years as being anything more than a rough guide to his abilities. The failure of many parents and teachers to realise that some children develop more slowly than others is responsible for much childish unhappiness.

THE CHILD WHO SHOWS NO PERSISTENCE

A very common problem with parents is getting children to make an effort and to persist in the face of difficulties. Undoubtedly children vary greatly in their inherent capacity for making prolonged effort. But whether the child's lack of persistence is due to natural causes or to mismanagement, the methods adopted to develop concentration and the use of effort will be much the same. Common faults of management may be (1) keeping the child dependent too long; (2) discouragement; (3) unwise use of praise and blame; (4) over-stimulation. As we have referred to it so often in this chapter we may ignore the first and concentrate on the other causes.

AVOID DISCOURAGEMENT

In the lives of most of us discouragement holds a much bigger place than encouragement. When things go wrong criticism or correction is generally given, but when things go right the only indication that they are satisfactory may be the absence of any comment at all. Adults often say they would appreciate a little praise occasionally from those in authority, or from husbands, wives, parents, etc. When *they* feel this is necessary if they are to get full satisfaction out of life, how much more necessary it must be for the child whose self-confidence and sense of personal worth are so much the result of our appreciation of what he does.

When a child of any age does anything that involves some mental or moral effort he should receive some acknowledgment that shows it has been appreciated, either in the form of thanks or of commendation. When I say effort, I really mean effort, not necessarily success. For instance, many children gain success without using much effort; and so, unless we focus attention on the effort, less brilliant or less skilful children are liable to become weary of well-doing because they can never achieve the success of the others, and because the sincerity

of their attempts to do their best has not been recognised. When a child has tried to do something to the best of his ability but has failed, or if he has struggled to overcome a temptation, to which, however, he has ultimately yielded, he should be encouraged towards future efforts by some comment showing that his effort has been appreciated, despite his failure.

It helps also to admit that grown-ups often fall short as he has done; and that all of us, children and adults, can learn a great deal by our failures.

Some children seem to show a natural persistence at a very early age, and with wise treatment this should lead to will-power directed towards some worthwhile end. Other children who show it in equal measure when young may be so frustrated by interference and negative criticism that they become afraid of acting on their own initiative and learn to lean on others. They are liable, as they grow older, to suffer from the criticism and disapproval of parents and teachers, who blame them for their inability to make consistent and prolonged effort; whereas it is they, the adults, who are responsible for the trouble, and not the children at all. Other children who are frustrated in their attempts to do things for themselves may later become resistant and rebellious, in this way showing the struggle of their inner selves towards survival.

DANGERS OF OVER-STIMULATION

Some children are so sensitive and alert to a great variety of stimuli, are so responsive to every object that appeals to their senses, that they can easily become scatterbrained; in other words, they cannot attend to any one thing for any length of time. If this tendency is recognised early enough, a great deal can be done to overcome it if parents have the necessary patience and insight.

For children who show a strong tendency to excitability a great variety of toys should be avoided. Only a very few

should be given to them or placed in their toy cupboards at one time. Interference with any of their activities should be reduced to a minimum. When lack of interest in a particular game or plaything begins to appear they should be helped with some new idea. As early as possible they should be given little jobs to do, and should receive praise when they are well performed, though impossible standards of perfection should not be expected from children of any age. Over-excitement and over-stimulation should be avoided. In such and similar ways children may be helped greatly to overcome a tendency that is a very frequent cause of inefficiency, self-distrust, and consequent maladjustment.

Over-excitement and over-stimulation are bad for all children, but particularly for the excitable ones. Even in infancy this should be borne in mind. The Baby Clinics emphasise the need for the child being left quietly in his cot or pram. Many mothers who are careful in this respect often have to meet difficulties created by grandparents, relatives and friends (especially when they live in the house), who interfere with their routine by constantly disturbing and playing with the child. This may prevent or destroy the formation of good habits, and the quiet child, who has hitherto been content to be alone, begins to demand constant attention. This is a habit that does not end with infancy but may become the cause of serious problems as the child grows older. In his school-life he will suffer from inability to concentrate on his work, and this may lead him to become one of the failures and misfits of adult life.

USE OF PRAISE AND BLAME

Much more discretion than is customary needs to be exercised in the use of praise and blame. They should have as their purpose the arousing of the child's desire to make some effort. As it is, they frequently fail to accomplish this objective because they work upon the child's fear of unpleasant results if he does not exert effort, or play upon a

primitive anxiety. The general trend of child management is usually towards the over-emphasis of the negative, of the evil effects of doing wrong, instead of upon the positive, upon the joy and happiness that come from doing right. This latter point of view is not contrary to the obligation that we should do right because Right is Right. We must remember that it is necessary for us to lead the child gradually towards this adult concept, by making happiness the result of his well-doing in the early years. If from the beginning we safeguard the child's self-respect in the wisest way, by encouraging his happiness in well-doing, he will not be content, as a rule, unless he lives in accordance with the standards he has gradually developed.

We must be patient, however, while these standards are being formed, and not force our adult standards upon the child.

For example, some people believe that a child of three or four should be capable of telling exact factual truth all the time, and accuse him of telling lies when he plays "pretend" with ideas as he does with toys. Again, until the age of adolescence, children cannot understand why adults make such a fuss about personal cleanliness. We must set a standard, and to a certain degree insist upon it, e.g. the daily bath and washing hands before meals. Some people, however, are not satisfied with essentials, but make a fuss when children get dirty and untidy, as they must, in their play. Again, in all periods of childhood the young people are liable to break things through lack of muscular control. If these misadventures are frequent, and treated as crimes instead of as mistakes or accidents which must be rectified, the child through fear may become still less controlled and he may, in consequence, suffer still more. The child who is constantly punished for spelling mistakes rarely becomes a good speller, but often becomes worse through fear of failure. Teachers who act as though spelling and other errors are almost criminal offences do great damage to the

child's power of adjusting himself happily to school and, possibly, to the larger world outside. I have, for example, heard a teacher say on beginning a dictation lesson, "Well, John, how many mistakes are you going to make today?" This discourages John from the outset, as he may have made up his mind to make fewer or no mistakes. It is important not to give the child the impression that we expect him to fail. After all, most of us, adults as well as children, are strongly influenced by the attitudes of those with whom we work or play.

Many undesirable habits may develop when a child of any age knows that he is expected to fail. One of the worst of these is the disinclination for making any effort if there is any possibility of failure. In the same way the child who is expected to be "naughty" rarely becomes any better, as he adjusts himself to our expectations of his behaviour. Blame, and the adults' expressed expectation of continual faults, cause the child to become uncertain of his ability to do the right thing.

It is imperative that adults should never speak to or act towards the child in a way that implies they expect him to fail. This negative suggestion must destroy self-confidence and the desire to make any effort. Too many parents and teachers have developed the habit of approaching certain children in this destructive manner.

This subject of adjustment or maladjustment is of supreme importance in the upbringing of children of all ages. No matter how much individual children may differ from one another we should always have one clear purpose in view—that as parents or teachers we help children to achieve a poised and well-balanced personality.

Note.—Many of the points discussed in this chapter are dealt with in greater detail in Chapter X of *The Young Child and His Parents*.

CHAPTER VII

BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS TYPICAL OF MALADJUSTMENT

IN the previous chapter some suggestions were given for the development of a well-adjusted child. We stressed how wrong attitudes towards children can create behaviour problems of various kinds. In the examples given we saw that certain characteristics are present in nearly every case—the individual, whether child or adult, is unable to adjust himself satisfactorily to others because he has either too high or too low an opinion of himself. In this chapter we shall deal with some specific forms of behaviour typical of maladjustment.

BLAMING OTHERS

IN all of us there exists a tendency to refuse to accept the responsibility for our failures. Some people put the blame on others, some lay it upon fate, bad luck or “the will of God.” Some, again, will blame their inherited tendencies or the duplicity of others. Whatever the scapegoat selected, the fact remains that the individual has not learned to face life reasonably, but feels that failure in any form is a disgrace.

This habit can originate very early through such simple things as teaching the child to “hit the naughty floor” if he falls and hurts himself. It may come because the child has been petted and comforted too much after mishaps, without teaching him to discriminate between those that are his own fault and those which are not. It may also arise through the child having learnt one day that an evasion or a slight deviation from fact saved him from punishment.

In cases where the child is fearful of punishment or criti-

cism, is constantly nagged or scolded, or is liable to be blamed for misadventures whether he is guilty or not, shifting the blame from himself is an easy method to adopt as a possible means of escape. This habit is also particularly liable to develop if a child has been made to suffer through the favouritism shown another child. In extreme cases, as the child grows older, blaming others may take the form of a persecution mania, i.e. a delusion that some person or persons have an evil desire to hurt or confound him. Mental hospitals have many such cases as these, known as paranoics.

BACK-BITING

The tendency to belittle people is a means of inflating one's own self-esteem by stressing another's inferiority. Though this tendency may have somewhat similar causes to that of blaming others, it is more generally developed in those who have some obvious defect, which may cause them to be a butt for ridicule. If a child has a defect, whether it be physical or mental, he should never be teased about it. If it can be rectified, then we should help him to rectify it; if it cannot, then he must learn to face it courageously and to try to find some compensating channel for his self-esteem.

Parents and teachers sometimes adopt the method of punishing children by making them appear ridiculous, and in school children are sometimes encouraged to laugh at another child for his faults or weaknesses. It is not only unpardonably cruel to the victim, who is often driven to adopt some subtle and undesirable form of self-defence, but is also deplorable training for the other children, who are being taught cruelty and intolerance.

The individual who is constantly pointing out the weaknesses of others and is therefore implying his own superiority is always driven on by a secret fear. That fear may be directed towards the individual or individuals specially singled out, or it may be fear of being themselves "found out." People who always impute evil motives to others should be treated

with caution, because their back-biting is often a projection of their own untrustworthiness, their sense of guilt, or their fear of themselves. These symptoms of maladjustment are closely associated with the attempts of some people to satisfy their self-esteem by always wanting to improve others, by always showing them better ways of doing things. Such people may be very self-centred, as is shown by the fact that they frequently want publicity for their good deeds.

In both adults and children, the cause of these last two habits may lie not only in the possession of actual defect or weakness, but may be induced by two entirely different situations—viz. by their having been dominated by a stronger personality, for example a parent, a teacher, a brother or sister; or through their having been so spoilt and pampered that failure or rebuffs cannot be tolerated.

When children begin to show either of these undesirable tendencies, parents should take stock of the whole situation and help the children to gain confidence in themselves. To do this, one child should never be compared with another to his detriment and we should avoid, so far as possible, creating the many situations which tend to arouse the child's resentment and sense of inferiority. If the child shows he is beginning to distrust himself, build up his confidence by helping him to achieve things he can really do. Above all, do not let him feel that success in lessons is the only thing that matters. As we said earlier, he should be helped to realise his ability in other directions and should feel that his efforts are appreciated. It is, after all, character, not examinations, that should count most.

ARGUING AND MAKING EXCUSES

We all know one or more of those irritating people who argue about everything. No statement, no request, however simple, self-evident or reasonable, is allowed to pass without question. Such people are not really trying to arrive at the truth, but are trying to find reasons for believing and doing

as they wish, or for avoiding the things they do not want to do. This tendency often appears at quite an early age. Some parents are rather proud at first of their offspring's ability for arguing, but it is not many years before they cease to be either proud or amused.

What may lead to this very undesirable habit? Arguing, like blaming others, can be a weapon adopted by the "spoilt" child who realises that his parents are reluctant to use discipline. Sometimes it may arise through imitation. When the child is told or asked to do something and asks "Why?" the adult, who may have given the command or made the request for the sake of his or her own pleasure or convenience, has to give a reply that *seems* reasonable. At a very early age the child "senses" this insincerity and learns to use the same technique in his turn.

When there are legitimate reasons why a child should behave in a certain manner it is wise to give them to him. He should certainly be told, for example, why he should be careful in crossing the streets, why he cannot have more pocket-money and so on. The unfortunate thing is that the reasons are often given so angrily or impatiently that the child is not convinced but antagonised, as he feels that they are not genuine, and that the chief reason for the prohibition or command is the desire to frustrate him. Further angry argument intensifies the bad feeling between parent and child. When a child is treated reasonably and sincerely from the earliest age, these situations rarely arise.

As soon as a child is old enough to understand, always explain why a thing must or must not be done, but as simply and briefly as possible. If this is done, the child is more likely to do as we wish than if he is drowned in words, as he so often is by voluble adults who seem to get a good deal of satisfaction out of their own verbosity. If, however, a tendency to futile argument begins to be used as a weapon for avoiding or putting off some course of action, it should be discouraged from the outset by some quiet remark such as, "I have ex-

plained why this must be done, and you understand quite well. We shall not talk about it further." If once the child finds he has the power to involve the adult in argument, he will use it, and with increasing frequency, as he grows older.

If, on the other hand, a child is willing to yield to reason, it is a good thing to make him feel the value of reasonableness by expressing pleasure at his decision. *Praise given for rational behaviour by an adult who sets a standard in this direction can accomplish a great deal.* If, however, the child will not yield to reason but flies into a rage, he must not achieve any satisfactory result by this behaviour (vide section on "Anger," page 50).

The habit of continually asking "Why?" is very characteristic of the young child. In his case, however, it is not a means for procrastination, for it is almost the only method he knows for holding adults in conversation. When two grown-ups are together, the expression of an idea by one immediately arouses some idea in the mind of the other, so that there is a constant interchange of thought between them. Children, however, have neither the experience, the vocabulary, nor a sufficiently developed intelligence to be able to do this, consequently they attempt to maintain a dialogue by throwing in a "Why?" as their contribution. Though this is normal to all children at a certain period, it should not continue as a constant habit beyond the age of four and a half to five. Should it do so we need to examine the conditions of the child's life, so that we may discover if, for some reason, he is not getting a legitimate amount of attention, or too much.

I would like to give a warning here that one must be careful to *distinguish arguing from reasoning, especially when the child grows older and begins to question the validity of many adult ideas.* This must not be regarded as a symptom of maladjustment. It is foolish for parents to insist that all their points of view should be held by their children. Two genera-

tions can never think exactly alike, because each has lived its most impressionable years in a different world. Parents should encourage intelligent discussion on all topics and should listen willingly and with interest to the views of the young people, particularly during puberty and adolescence, and should enjoy this evidence of their mental growth. If they do not, the boy or girl will drift farther and farther away from them. If parents would try to remember their own adolescence, and could recall their own feelings when their parents refused to listen to their ideas, they would realise what their own intolerant attitude is doing to their children.

ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES

Children who are brought up reasonably, who are encouraged to think things out for themselves, are much less likely to accept ideas merely on authority. From the point of view of human progress this is an advantage; but it is a disadvantage from the point of view of the authoritative parent or teacher who wants his or her children merely to reproduce him or herself.

If a child cannot accept a statement because it seems illogical, he should not be asked to do so. For example, a small boy of six told his mother that the teacher had told them an untruth—she had said the world was round and that it turned around like a ball. He said it was not true because people would fall off when they got to the bottom and the buildings would be upside-down. The fact that he brought his doubts home instead of expressing them at school proved that the teacher was asking for assimilation or acceptance of ideas from her pupils and not for intelligent thought. A child should never be asked to accept an idea which he cannot understand; it is better that he should be left with his doubt in the hope that opportunity will arise later to prove the point to his satisfaction. Only in this way can intellectual honesty be developed. Most of us are intellectually dishonest.

We believe often just what we want to believe; we accept too much on authority either because we are too lazy or too frightened to examine ideas that may upset our wishful thinking.

We may seem to have left the subject of the child's maladjustment far behind, but we have not. *The child who always accepts the ideas of others without thought will probably soon learn to accept his own wishes as being the test of value*, because he has not been taught to accept responsibility for his own actions and to think about their effect on others.

As he grows older his desires must be bolstered up by any kind of excuse that will serve to justify actions that are the outcome of anti-social and immoral attitudes. Even should it not lead to such extreme behaviour the child who has not learned to think things out for himself will probably show, sooner or later, some of the typical symptoms of maladjustment.

TELLING LIES

I shall conclude this chapter by dealing with two behaviour problems—lying and stealing—which are usually regarded as crimes, whereas they should be regarded as symptoms of maladjustment.

Lies are of many kinds and may be due to many causes. Some are conscious, some unconscious. We must try to realise that truth, as we see it, is acquired as the result of experience, that the child's world and the adult's world are two different things. The child understands so little that he interprets what he sees in his own way; and he lives so much in a world of imaginative play, in which he is encouraged by adults, that patience is needed while he builds up his concept of the difference between truth and falsehood, reality and unreality. It is for this reason that we should try to distinguish between those lies which are conscious and those which are unconscious, for each should be dealt with in a different way.

UNCONSCIOUS LIES

By unconscious lies we mean those that are due to the child's immaturity and have, therefore, no moral content. "Yes, we know that," you may say, "but what are we to do about it? Should we not point out to the child the truth of the matter?" In answer to such questions we can only say that it depends on the child's age and stage of development. If we understand the causes of these untruths we shall have a better idea of how they should be treated.

Causes

1. *The small child sees things in an entirely different perspective from what we do.* Most parents have had the experience of children telling them extraordinary stories about lions walking down the street, men as tall as houses, and so on. We tend to forget that the child lives in an adult world, and that everything must seem much larger to him than it does to us. So we should accept such tales with some casual comment. These stories should cease as the child gains more experience; it is only when they do not cease that we should regard them as symptoms of maladjustment.

2. *Memory is very uncertain and small children have often little power to recall, unassisted, any details of past experience.* A small boy may come home from kindergarten and when questioned by his mother about what he has been doing, will reply "Nothing." Yet he has been happily occupied all the time. Other children may say that they do the same thing, such as "drawing," "blocks," etc., all day and every day.

They also have *no conception of time*, so that they are quite likely to insist that something occurred yesterday, when it happened several days earlier, and so on. Never try to make a small child realise his mistake. He only gets bothered, as his statement is the truth as he sees it; being badgered may lead him to deliberate lying in the future. This confusion about time is very liable to occur when the child has had

some experience that has made a deep impression, whether pleasant or unpleasant.

3. *Wish fulfilment.* This may operate in various ways. If a child has a strong desire he may imagine so clearly the thing he wants, or that he wishes to do, that it becomes an accomplished fact. This condition is found very frequently among under-privileged children with few or no possessions, and who live emotionally starved lives. It may exist in the case of children who have all material goods but still lack emotional satisfaction through being over-disciplined or over-protected; or through not having sufficient opportunity for self-expression in both work and play.

The child who tells a story of something he has done, which is obviously untrue, such as having killed a lion that was going to eat the baby, may be expressing in this way some unsatisfied desire or some inner conflict that is causing him unhappiness. He may have recently heard a story about lions and may have been thinking about what he would do if a lion came. He is sure, maybe, that he would be strong and brave enough to kill it; on the other hand, he may be afraid that he would not. In either case the experience may be so vivid in his imagination that he actually lives it.

Should stories of this type be constantly occurring about the baby they may be the expression of mental conflict. He may be unconsciously jealous of the baby, so wants to get rid of it. At the same time he loves the baby and wants to protect it. Here the treatment will vary according to the cause, but the statement must not be taken as a lie.

A common cause of trouble is a situation such as: "Where's my hat, Mother?" "Where did you put it when you came home?" "On the hook." "You couldn't have done so; if you had, it would be there now." "But I tell you I did. I remember doing it." "Don't tell untruths about it, John. It doesn't make it any better." "But I tell you I did." In the end the hat is found in the laundry, perhaps, where it had been thrown in the hurry to get to play.

Adults often do these things—we *know* we put our keys somewhere, and blame people for moving them. Then we find them in a drawer, having quite forgotten until we found them that we had even opened it. In such episodes the child's statement is to be ignored. The point to be stressed is the need for orderliness, and methods should be devised to encourage it.

In such cases as these there is no need for anxiety provided the child is developing normally in other respects. As he grows older, gains more experience, understands more and observes more accurately, these apparently untruthful statements will become less frequent, and by the time he is between five and seven years of age should have disappeared altogether. On the other hand, they may develop into imaginative stories consciously told for the entertainment of others. This is what should happen if the child is developing normally.

Should he be in any way unhappy, however, this tendency may become a very dangerous thing (vide chapter on "Imagination"). *Throughout this early period it is important that the child should not be made conscious of the fact that he is telling an untruth; he should not be accused of telling lies; for by so doing we may give him the first suggestion that he can use words to deceive.* Parents who have a high moral code but little understanding of children often turn the latter into little liars by demanding standards that are far beyond the capacity of an inexperienced and immature child.

CONSCIOUS LIES

Conscious lies are a much more serious matter, on the whole, than the unconscious ones, because they are habits set up as the result not of immaturity but of experience.

Causes

1. *Fear.* This is the most common cause of deliberate lying, and is, in fact, responsible for more than half the

lies that are told. Fear may be aroused in many different ways. If we try to manage children in a reasonable manner instead of by getting "all het-up" and emotional, the child's tendency to escape from pain, either mental or physical, will probably never be aroused. Get rid of the fear and the lies will cease. The problems arising from fear have been dealt with in another chapter.

2. *Egotism*. Spoilt and neglected children are both liable to tell lies because they want to be in the centre of the picture—the spoilt child because he has been taught to consider himself the hub of the Universe and must keep himself there at all costs; the neglected child because he needs some means for gaining attention. These lies may take the form of boasting or telling fantastic tales of things seen or experienced, so that he may seem wonderful in the eyes of others. Another form of lie typical of the school-child from about six, and of the adolescent, is that which is caused by a drab or uninteresting existence. The school-child usually tells stories of marvellous experiences; so may the adolescent, but his particular lies frequently centre around imaginary sex experiences. The Children's Court handles many of these cases every year.

3. *Fun*. A clever child often enjoys the sense of power that comes to him by telling, as true, stories that he knows to be pure phantasy. In such cases enter into the fun, so that the child knows that you see through him. "That's a good Fairy-tale. Can you make up another?" is a wise attitude to adopt. It is important that we keep the child's imagination alive and give him legitimate means of expression. Later he may be encouraged to make up "True Stories" and "Fairy-tales."

4. *The selfish or lazy child sometimes tells untruths in order to gain advantages without effort*. There may be physical causes for the laziness, or it may be the product of having had too much done for him, so that he has become disinclined for any effort. It is this attitude that must be overcome rather than the lying.

5. *Imitation.* The child hears adults making false statements. Parents make promises and do not keep them. Not only that. They often say they made no promise, thus adding a lie to the already bad situation. They threaten children with dogs, policemen, bogies, etc., and the child ultimately finds out that the threats are so much nonsense.

He is taken to the dentist and is told beforehand that he will not be hurt, is given medicine which he is told is not nasty. Having found that his parents have no compunction about making such false statements to achieve their ends, why should he not adopt the same procedure?

6. *Suggestion.* If parents expect untruths; if, because of their anxiety, they are prone to see deceitfulness in many harmless situations in which the child is involved; if they are picky about the slightest deviation from truth, the child is often forced into a situation from which the only escape is a lie. It is a bad thing for a child to think that parents expect him to be a liar, for he will then, in all probability, live up to their expectations.

7. *Impulse, the result of sudden fear,* may make a child who has always been sympathetically treated tell a lie for which he is sorry immediately after; but having told it he feels he must stand by it. As far as possible avoid putting the child into a situation where an impulsive lie may be told. If you feel sure that a child has done a certain thing, it is wiser to ask him how, or why, he did it, rather than "Did you do so and so?" You can do this when you are practically sure, so that a lie cannot be added to the original offence. An older child, however, who has been brought up justly and sympathetically should be capable of admitting the truth. If he does not, then a reasonable attitude will make him less obstinate than anger. Care should be taken that the question should not be asked in such a tone that the child's fear is immediately aroused.

Never badger the child into telling the truth, for he may in the end say that he has done something which he has not

done, simply because he is worn down and cannot stand the strain. Then he may be punished for the lie when it is discovered. This is the height of cruelty and injustice, since he was forced into the situation in the first place.

If the atmosphere of the home gives the child a sense of security, if his parents are his friends and give in their own lives a living example of the qualities they wish him to possess, no major problems of this kind are likely to arise. Even if undesirable conditions exist at school which could cause difficulties, the child has been helped to meet them. *Of course, one must uphold the need for truth in talking to the child, but fewer words and more effort to rectify the conditions that have caused untruthfulness will have a better effect.*

These are preventive measures. Should the child have formed the habit of telling lies, this analysis of causes may help you to understand the reason; and, knowing this, it is generally possible to remove the cause. This will mean a change in the management of the child on the lines suggested. Sometimes the improvement will be very rapid, but in many cases it takes time, for the child has to build up a new habit of thought and a new attitude, perhaps towards his parents, but certainly towards himself. This is not an easy thing to do, for an old habit has to be broken down before a new one can be established.

STEALING

Telling untruths is an almost inevitable accompaniment to stealing, though all children who tell lies do not steal. One needs to exercise caution in regard to stealing, because normally stealing implies a conscious sense of wrong-doing, which does not develop in the child for some years. *It is not until he has reached a certain mental and social development that the child is capable of differentiating between his property rights and those of others.* We must remember that children are warned at an early age that such acts are against the wishes of their parents, but they are not always given a

clear idea of what is meant by the general social code of honesty.

"When one considers that all children are born into the world uncivilised, non-moral individuals, dominated entirely by selfish motives and with the sum total of their physical and mental activity directed towards seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, and that certain natural tendencies are constantly operating in early life unchallenged by training, experience, and education, it is not surprising that pilfering among children is common. Stealing is but a deviation from the normal instinctive tendencies to acquisition . . . it is one of the instinctive tendencies that need to be inhibited and directed by training and experience. It varies in intensity in different individuals, but to deny its existence is not to solve the problem."

As with any other form of human conduct, we must study the underlying forces that bring about the act. We must have some knowledge of the motives that lay behind it, because without this we cannot deal with the problem intelligently.

We sometimes hear people accusing a small child of three or four of stealing. This is a serious indication of a complete lack of understanding on the adult's part. *A little child does not understand why he cannot have a thing if he likes it. He must not be dubbed a thief, but must learn that whenever he takes another person's property, he must give it back.* The small child's candour when asked to turn out his pockets at kindergarten before going home, his absence of guilt as he hands over a pocketful of beads shows that he has no evil motive in his act. When a child persistently does this, investigation generally shows that he has few or no possessions of his own, and when he is given some toys to take home which are to be his, the trouble usually ceases. If it does not, then there is, as a rule, some other serious defect in the home, such as older brothers or sisters or parents who steal, or difficulties in the home atmosphere.

Causes of Stealing

1. People do not always realise how certain factors in the *home environment* lead to stealing.

- (a) If the people of the household are free and easy about the family possessions, they cannot expect a young child to discriminate as to the things he may or may not take.
- (b) If the adults take the child's possessions when they need them without asking his permission first, they are encouraging him to act in the same way towards others,
- (c) If he is laughed at when he does these things as a small child, a bad habit is established, so that it is very unfair to punish him for doing the same thing later, when it has ceased to be funny.
- (d) If there is discord in the home, some children express their sense of insecurity by stealing.

2. *A child who has been indulged* in every way from infancy—this is sometimes particularly the case with an only or youngest child—may satisfy his whims by stealing, if any of his desires have been refused.

3. *A child who has been hurt* by over-harsh discipline, by criticism or ridicule, or feels he is not wanted in the home, may steal as an instinctive method of "getting even" with those who are responsible. A child who is not liked by other children, who is teased or ignored, will often do the same thing. A small girl of six and a half was once brought to me for stealing money with which she bought sweets, etc., for the children at school. She was the middle child of the family, alternatively shy and assertive. The father was harsh, the mother devoted to the baby. The child could not get on well with the children at school, but she bought temporary popularity by having money to spend. In such a case the cause of the trouble is obvious. The parents, realising that the problem was due to their own attitudes towards the child, made a successful effort to overcome them.

4. *Starved Emotions.* On another occasion a child of eleven was brought to me for stealing (only at school) money which was always spent on presents for her teacher or other girls. She had been expelled just before she was brought to me. She was a fine child and obviously normal. Her father was divorced, her mother had left her with a middle-aged aunt and uncle who were very fond of her, but were undemonstrative, very conventional and narrowly orthodox. The child was well treated in every way and had two shillings a week pocket-money. Questioning elicited the fact that she had no play-life out of school as her aunt did not like the children nearby and did not encourage her to bring girls home. She had never read a fairy-tale, only "good books." At home she practised the piano and helped in the house. Altogether the child had a completely starved emotional life. I had her sent to another school, the principal of which, I knew, would help her in every possible way. She was given opportunity for play, creative expression in art, literature and rhythmic movement. Her aunt was asked to give her more freedom and more outward demonstration of affection. Some difficulties regarding sex knowledge were also cleared up. I lost touch with the child after two years, but during that time there was no recurrence of the trouble.

5. *Sex Difficulties.* Not infrequently one finds stealing associated with certain anxieties concerning the sex life of the child. The connection between the two is an interesting psychological study with which I have no time to deal here. But it has been found in many cases that when sex troubles have been solved, stealing automatically stops. A. S. Neil gives some interesting cases in his books *The Problem Child* and *The Problem Parent*, as does Healy in his book *Mental Conflicts and Behaviour*.

6. *Lack of Regular Pocket-money.* Other children steal because they have no pocket-money and feel inferior when their companions have money to spend. All children should have a regular sum of money, however small, given them

each week as pocket-money (this subject was dealt with fully in *Talks to Parents*).

7. Some children steal for the *thrill of adventure*, as when they rob an orchard, although they may have fruit-trees in their own gardens. This type of stealing is generally recognised as being an escapade in the case of fruit, but is regarded quite differently if it happens to be anything else of value that is stolen.

Some years ago a small gang of boys about eleven years of age, all sons of professional men and men of good standing, got into trouble for stealing mascots and fittings of motor-cars. When they were apprehended, the ringleader led the police to his father's garage (the father was a doctor) and there they found, hidden in a hole which had been dug by the boys, dozens of car accessories, all stolen. To the boys it was just good fun; the anti-social character of their act was completely disregarded for the sake of the adventure. Fortunately, the greater psychological understanding of the motives for such behaviour has brought about a reform in the law, and such conduct today is not necessarily regarded as criminal when indulged in by children and young adolescents. The Children's Court, which deals with these cases so wisely, sends the child home on probation; the experience of having been in the hands of the police is sufficient in the great majority of cases to make the youngster conscious of the meaning of his behaviour.

8. *Lack of Proper Play Facilities* is another very common cause of maladjustment. This has been proved in every community where supervised playgrounds and recreation centres have been opened. No matter how poor the district, how high the incidence of delinquency, it has been found in every case that the decrease in juvenile crime of all kinds is not only very great, but, in some cases, it completely disappears. Satan will always find evil for idle hands, not because the children are predisposed to evil but simply because they must do something. And if there is no one to

show them good and constructive things to do, they can only do those things for which the environment provides. Stealing, sexual precocity, truancy are the three commonest forms of maladjustment which come before the Children's Court. The tragedy of the whole matter is that the adult community forces the children into these avenues, because it fails to provide them with facilities for healthy and interesting occupations for their leisure.

The Child's Need of Being Trusted

Stealing, therefore, is a symptom of maladjustment, of an infantile attitude to society that should have been outgrown, but which has persisted because of certain factors in the environment. The child has to be re-educated in such a way that his self-respect is built up, and his wall of distrust and resentment pulled down. The young thief, like the young liar, must find someone who trusts him, who will help him to understand why he has behaved so foolishly, and when he does understand this and is given responsibility, his confidence in his ability to go straight is gradually developed. It may be a slow process, but patience must be exercised, for re-education is often very slow. No matter how the child fails, he must be helped to feel that we believe he still has the power to make good. We need not preach long sermons but, by a few words and our manner towards him, we can inspire him with faith in himself and with the desire to rectify any harm he has done. With this, of course, must come the rectification, as far as is possible, of any wrong existing in the environment. It is useless to talk to the child if we do not, at the same time, strive to change the conditions that led to his fall.

Such are a few of the problems and situations that are sure to arise in many homes. What I have written will, I hope, help you to understand how to approach difficulties that I have not been able to touch upon. *In dealing with problems of child management the important thing is to recognise the*

situation as a problem, to think about it and try to find its cause in the conscious or unconscious needs of the child, and having arrived at some conclusion, to deal with it rationally and with common sense according to the temperament of the individual child. Sympathy and practical common sense meet most situations. It is unnecessary to become over-anxious if first attempts fail; some other method should be tried. After all, everyone brought up under the old methods has not been a failure, though many have suffered more than they should.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NERVOUS CHILD

IF we were to ask a group of ordinary people to mention some common form of maladjustment shown by children, a large number would probably think of the nervous child. In her book, *The Child and His Problems*, Dr. Alice Hutchison says, "If we accept the statements of parents and others as to the characteristics of the children for whom they are responsible, then we must of necessity believe that there are a very large number of nervous children in the world.

"Experience, however, teaches us to adopt an attitude of scepticism towards these statements . . . in the absence of convincing proof. Now the necessity for acting thus has been occasioned by the extraordinary facility with which parents diagnose neurosis in the child. In the out-patient department one is oftentimes wearied with the formula, 'My child is so highly strung and so nervous, I don't know what to do with him.'

"The tone in which it is uttered betrays not merely anxiety but a certain pride in the existence of these symptoms. It is as though behind the words uttered lay the thought, 'My child is not of common mould like other children, but owns a more delicate frame.'

"If the truth of this be doubted, let us but compare the tone adopted in discussing the nervous child with that used in referring to the little thief. In the latter case the atmosphere is filled with grief and dismay, and the thought behind the utterance seems to be, 'What is this evil thing which has crept into my family?'"

In both cases the parents imply that the situation is one

for which they themselves take no responsibility. One, however, is a matter for unconscious pride, the other for conscious shame.

When we come to analyse these nervous children and to diagnose the causes of the trouble, we find them so varied and covering so many errors of training that we cease to believe that every nervous child is possessed of some special fineness or delicacy of constitution.

DEFINITION OF NERVOUS CHILD

What is a nervous child? He is one who is emotionally unstable, and he is equally unstable in all his emotions. He is prone to feel everything very intensely. If he feels happy, the intense excitement he betrays is merely an indication of the equally extreme misery he will probably feel that day or in the near future as a reaction to his present mood. He is always in heaven or hell.

"If an incident irritates him, he flares up in petulant rage. He is usually very affectionate and craves much attention and sympathy. He often suffers agonies of timidity and shyness, from which he reacts sometimes with extreme self-assertion.

"His imagination is exceptionally vivid, and he often has a keen dramatic sense with strong imitative faculties. But the emotions which introduce the greatest difficulty into his life are those of fear and anxiety. . . .

"Intellectually he is quick, but at the same time inattentive, and not equal to sustained effort.

"In appearance he betrays a lack of robustness, and we never expect to find him stout. We rarely miss the look of anxiety with wrinkled brows, which is so distinctive a feature. Some have even a haunted look, which betrays the secret of a terror hugged to the soul, lest expression of it should provoke laughter and ridicule; for the nervous child is keenly sensitive to ridicule.

"His movements are apt to be clumsy (though this is not

always the case) and he readily develops habit spasms. He cannot sit still and seems compelled to toy with a button or a corner of his coat while speaking. A stutter or a stammer is developed with extreme facility and is extremely difficult to cure.

"Sleep is generally light, restless, and frequently broken by night terrors, which cause him to rise unrefreshed and irritable. . . .

"Digestive troubles are common, and, as would be expected, are frequently combined with fastidiousness at the table.

"Such a child is extremely sensitive to noises: this trait is well-marked even in babyhood, when the sound of a sneeze will sometimes provoke a burst of tears " (Hutchison).

NERVOUS CHILD MADE, NOT BORN

This description of the nervous child by Dr. Hutchison shows that the individual symptoms are those frequently seen in normal children and are not necessarily major problems; but *the nervous child possesses many of them at once*. Previous chapters have indicated how many of these symptoms may be developed, and that many, if not all of them, can be more or less easily cured, since they are due to lack of understanding of the child's needs or to faulty management. There are, however, certain children who are more prone to develop "nervousness" than others; but *many of those who are diagnosed as "nervous" by the mother, who thus absolves herself from any responsibility in the matter, are often only wilful and undisciplined*, or have become so tied to the mother (mother fixation) that tears and clinging to her are weapons for exploiting power over her rather than genuine qualities of personality.

Some time ago a mother brought one of these "nervous children" (a girl of four) for a consultation. She had warned me of the scene that would develop if she left the child alone with me. I was prepared to run the risk, having already

taken measure of the mother in a previous interview. When the mother left the child there was a horrible outcry, which did not disturb me. I went on looking at picture books, threaded some coloured beads and busied myself with things of interest to the average child. Soon the cries became less persistent as the little girl gave occasional attention to what I was doing. In ten minutes they had stopped altogether, and I was aware of a small interested figure beside me. In the simple tests I subsequently gave her, she showed a nervous stability quite normal for her age. The child was suffering from the over-anxiety, the unconscious possessiveness and over-care of the mother, which was developing in her a growing sense of frustration and resistance.

INNATE NERVOUSNESS

There are, however, children who are genuinely nervous either through an inherent constitution or through influences in the environment brought to bear upon them in the earliest years. The first type shows in the supersensitiveness to sounds and in the intense reactions to all experiences in babyhood. These children, when they are older, rarely keep still. They are what is sometimes called the "motor type," since they must always be moving. They have little concentration, being susceptible to every new stimulus that appears. Such children often accumulate a wide range of general knowledge if their intelligence is as active as their bodies; but they are not students, and because they cannot settle to their school work are frequently at the bottom of the class. These are the children for whom crafts and project work are necessary if they are to gain any organised knowledge.

All children who tend to become the nervous type are not "motors." Some become nervous because, as I mentioned above, they seem to be supersensitive to all kinds of experiences that have little effect upon other children. "Their nerves seem to be on the surface," as some people say. How

far this characteristic is inborn, and how far it may have been induced by influences surrounding the child before and immediately after birth, would be hard to say. Infants may undoubtedly show nervous symptoms at a very early age. They are, as Dr. Richardson says in his book *The Nervous Child and His Parents*, over-sensitive to light, to noises and to the presence of others than mother or nurse. "Their crying seems unduly prolonged; they make much more fuss with getting on with their nursing than we think they should; it takes them longer to drop off to sleep. . . . As they grow older they begin to show difficulties in adjusting their lives to the world about them. They fight and struggle with mother and nurse, with brothers and sisters; and outside children do not like to play with them. . . .

"As they reach school age, some of these children find difficulty in adjusting themselves to the routine of the class room. They feel that the teachers discriminate against them; that children no brighter and better are put above them; that they are not given marks as high as their real ability entitles them to have. They take to themselves slights that were not intended. . . . Their skins are thinner than it seems to us they ought to be."

Whenever a child shows any of these traits, it is evident that he needs constructive help. Whether the cause lies in himself or in outside circumstances, the need for help is there; and our job is to analyse all those conditions that may have a detrimental effect on him, physically or mentally, and to ensure that, as far as is possible, all adverse influences are removed.

PHYSICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING MENTAL HEALTH

As in every other problem of child management, we must first of all consider the physical factors.

Has the child had from infancy plenty of *sunshine and fresh air* or are the adults so afraid of cold and wind that they are constantly protecting him against them when no

danger exists? Many people on a wet day insist on keeping windows shut so that the atmosphere of the house becomes heated and heavy. It is this as much as the confinement indoors that is responsible for the tempers and disputes about trifles that are so much more frequent in bad weather. Healthy people do not have to worry about cold, wind and draughts; and the mother's own fear of them frequently causes her so to protect the child that he does not have the chance to become immune to them.

Cold Baths are also a tonic, and are not taken as frequently as they should be in these days of gas-heaters and hot-water systems.

Bodily Functions. All children should be taught to regard the regular evacuation of the bowels after the first meal of the day or before it as an essential duty. Constipation is responsible for much irritability and nerviness in children of all ages, as well as in adults.

Children should also learn as early as possible to blow their noses. The baby should be induced to sneeze. The older child should learn to use a handkerchief. If the nose is stopped up, as it often is in childhood, proper breathing-in of sufficient pure air is impossible.

Diet and Digestion. Correct diet—plenty of milk and cold water—uncooked vegetables and fruit—the avoidance of food between meals—and regular meal hours will help towards normal physical and mental health.

Long, Quiet Sleep. Correct sleeping habits can be formed only through encouraging absolutely regular bed-time—no excitement or over-stimulation just before sleep. Unless the child has his correct quota of sleep at each age (see Chap. V, *The Young Child and His Parents*) and has good sleeping habits developed, irritability is inevitable.

Activity and Rest Periods in proper proportion. Many children are denied sufficient activity through (1) lack of space; (2) too much stress being placed upon school work so that they do not have enough physical and mental

relaxation; (3) insistence upon "being quiet" and "keeping still" for the comfort of the adult, when the needs of the child are for activity, not for rest.

Physical Defects. Some children become "nervy" because they suffer from some defect of eye or ear; have inflamed tonsils or adenoids; are suffering from too much thyroid activity, etc.

You will find that I repeat many of these points throughout this book. This is very necessary as *people are prone to overlook many of the everyday conditions which are of tremendous importance in establishing and maintaining physical and mental health.* When the close inter-relation of mind and body and their mutual reactions upon each other are more fully appreciated, many of the present problems of both child and adult life will disappear.

PARENTAL ATTITUDES

We may inherit certain traits of character from our parents and ancestors as we inherit features, talents and even mannerisms, but too much emphasis must not be laid upon this as it tends to place more responsibility on heredity than is justified. A child may have a nervous and highly-strung parent, but the fact that the child seems to be of the same nature should not imply that his development of the same characteristics as the parent is inevitable. Imitation and suggestion play a very big part in any child's life, so that if a sensitive child is brought up by a tense and uncontrolled or unstable parent he has not much chance of developing in any other way. But if the parent changes or if the child is removed to another home, the most interesting developments may occur. For example, a young woman, the spoilt only child of rather elderly parents, had become the typical nervous, highly-strung mother, irritable with her own small girl who, she maintained, inherited her "temperament." There was constant conflict between them and temper tantrums on both sides. The father was a "peace at any price" man, so that his

policy was to escape all responsibility in situations which he felt quite incapable of handling. When the small daughter was about six years old the mother became seriously ill, and the child was sent to the country to live with an aunt, a serene and happy person of whom the child was very fond. The six months in the country did wonders for the child, who showed very soon the stabilising influence of her temporary home. But, unfortunately, when she returned to her parents the mother was unconsciously too proud of her "temperament" and too tangled up with her own emotional problems to exercise any control over her own attitudes, so, in a short time, the child was in the same state as before her visit to her aunt. We all know instances of children who are "nervous and highly strung" at home but show little, if any, of these characteristics when away from it. This is a clear indication that their behaviour is largely, if not entirely, conditioned by the environment and is not an innate quality.

THE HAVOC OF FEAR

Of course every child is born with a certain temperamental bias. Some are so calm and even stodgy that it would take very strong and frequent disturbing experiences to convert them into nervous children; even should they develop a neurosis in some direction, they would probably not show the same extreme reactions as would the more innately sensitive child. There is, however, one emotion which can have the most pervading influence upon any temperament, viz. fear. Its power will be determined by the circumstances under which it is first aroused, and by the degree to which the child is suggestible to fear.

Fears may be classified under two headings, (1) those that are objective and (2) those that are subjective. *Objective* fears, aroused by such things as thunder or anything new and strange; fears of animals, of policemen, of doctors, and

so on, may usually be overcome by wise and tactful management, since it is, as a rule, possible to discover the experience that led to the fears. But it is not so easy when we come to *subjective* fears, which are based on the feelings and attitudes of the child to something he has heard or experienced and upon which, perhaps, he has brooded in silence. The sensitive child who is constantly "roared at" so that he is always "on the jump," who is punished for every small misdemeanour, often develops a fear that the parent may one day be so angry that he (the child) may be killed by him. This in its turn may cause the child to think how much happier life would be if the parent could be killed. The conflict set up between the child's love, fear and sense of guilt aroused by harbouring these thoughts will inevitably develop a nervous child.

FEAR OF DESERTION BY PARENT

Another fear that has a terrible effect upon children is that of being deserted by their parents. Not long ago I heard of a mother who had to go to hospital for a week and told her three-year-old daughter that she was going to visit a friend. When hours passed and she did not return, the child was terrified. When the mother came home some weeks later, the child could not sleep at night, fearing her mother would be gone when she woke in the morning; neither would she leave her mother's side during the day; and she developed many of the symptoms characteristic of the emotionally unstable child. Even when this child was ten years old she still tried to go home on various pretexts during the day to see if her mother were still there.

FEAR OF DEATH

Some children are haunted by the fear of death, having heard about it in some disturbing manner. A small boy of five, told by an older child that the funeral of a friend of the family was taking him "to be buried in a big black hole,"

and that everyone was buried one day when they died, could not get the idea out of his mind. For weeks the parents were concerned at the change in the child who, though highly imaginative, had previously appeared quite normal in other ways. He became frightened of crossing streets. He refused to go to the surf. He worried when his parents or older sister were later than usual coming home. He was afraid to go into a dark room or to sleep in the dark. They could not find out what was the matter until one evening his mother found him sobbing quietly in bed. Picking him up and cuddling him, she got him at last to tell her of his terrible fear of being buried in a black hole when he died, and of his fear of death. If he had not had this opportunity to express the terrifying ideas over which he was always brooding, he may have become a permanent neurotic. As it was, a few months of tactful, understanding treatment overcame his fear. If, in such cases, parents themselves have any fear of death, the situation is more difficult to meet.

At a very early age, when the child first notices dead animals or birds, we should explain death as a long sleep or rest. If the parents believe in Heaven, they should give the child whatever picture of beauty it calls up in their minds. No young child should ever be taken to a funeral; but if he wants to know what it is all about, he should be helped to feel that the spirit that makes him and others happy, and makes him love people and things, leaves the body, which has become an empty, useless shell. Death is only a long quiet sleep. All parents must make such modifications of the theme as seem best to them and which they think will best suit their children. Fortunately, most children do not worry unduly over these matters. Some do spasmodically. Others, however, may develop a "Death Complex" which may make them "cranks" about germs and disease; while others suffer from some obsession more or less directly related to the idea of death.

NERVOUS SYMPTOMS

Fears of many kinds may permeate the child's mental life and cause him to become a typical nervous child; but none are worse than those induced by family situations. The over-anxious mother, the dominating parent of either sex, the possessive mother, the ultra-religious parents or those unhappily married—all such parents nearly always create for the children emotional difficulties which are manifested in certain typical ways.

A. Refusal to Eat. This is one of the most common symptoms of the so-called "nervous child." Whatever may have been the first cause of the trouble, it now has a twofold effect. The child no longer eats because he is hungry, or refuses because he is not; for him the primary consideration is whether eating, or not eating, will give him a victory over his mother. The mother too, quite unconsciously, loses her objective attitude, and the essential thing for her is now not whether the child needs the food, but whether she can win a victory over him or not. Each meal becomes a battle. The child, anticipating the struggle to come, loses the appetite he may have had; while the mother, dreading the daily conflict, is irritable even before the trouble has begun. So it is that the child who particularly needs a good and satisfying diet cannot get the maximum of nutrition even from the little he does eat.

B. Nervous Vomiting is very common among children. With the pre-school child it is often adopted as a means of preventing the mother from going out and leaving him. It is particularly frequent with the only child of all ages, who is often handicapped by having a nervous, over-anxious mother. The child responds to her attitude and becomes over-anxious and tense in his turn. The characteristic refusal of food, due partly to the child's desire to hold his mother's attention and partly to the "churned up" feeling the daily

battle arouses, causes him one day to vomit, and he finds that it has created an effect that is much more lasting and satisfying than other methods, because the mother's sympathy and not her anger has been aroused. Henceforth vomiting is used as a weapon. In the chapter on "Eating Habits," in *The Young Child and His Parents*, I suggested how this problem could be met.

C. *Fear of Failure.* Another type of nervousness is that of the ambitious, studious child who fears failure. There are, of course, certain people who are more innately disposed to such an attitude than others, but parents may easily intensify this tendency. If the child is an only child, if he is favoured or praised more than other members of the family, if he feels neglected in any way so that he is compelled to assert himself along lines in which he can succeed, the intensity of the desire, and the consequent fear of failure, may have a most detrimental effect upon the child's personality. If affects him physically as well as mentally, and vomiting is not infrequent. A child of this type is usually in such a hurry at one time, and so distressingly oblivious of time at others, that the whole family is disturbed. The youngster is so good at school, so anxious to do well, and yet he is handicapped by his "uncontrollable nervousness." He often works on an empty stomach, having found it impossible to keep his food down. He seems exhausted, but somehow never fails. His achievements are all the more admirable because of the price he pays for them.

The stress and strain under which he often labours will only disappear when he learns that it is not necessary to be first in everything. There may be a trait in the child's temperamental make-up that urges him in this direction; nevertheless, it may have been intensified by various family attitudes. If these can be changed, he may be helped towards a more normal outlook.

D. *Over-conscientiousness.* There is yet another type of child who should come under the heading of "nervous," but

who is frequently a source of great pride to the parents—when they are not infuriated by him. This is the child who is so conscientious that doing the right thing is almost an obsession. There is no human quality of greater value than conscientiousness, yet the over-conscientious person is a trial to others and a burden to himself. "Model children" tend to develop along these lines, a clear indication that to be a "model" rather than a normal child is not altogether desirable. Over-conscientiousness is symptomatic of a lack of mental balance, for over-conscientious children, like over-conscientious adults, are haunted by fears, and worry about all sorts of unimportant things.

Fussy and over-scrupulous parents are likely to have over-conscientious children as the result of the atmosphere of criticism and anxiety that they create. Excessively religious parents may develop the same tendency in the child, because they are prone to magnify all misdeeds into sins against themselves or against God, so that the child is in constant dread of breaking both human and divine laws.

This fear, allied to the natural resentment aroused by constant interference with and frustration of natural impulses, leads to a feeling of hostility towards the parents, which is often unconscious, since the child adopts, to a certain extent, the parents' ideas of what is right and wrong. The conflict thus set up between the conscious and the unconscious may show in many ways, e.g., in exaggerated ideas of what is wrong, with an accompanying sense of guilt when doing the most harmless things. The child, and later on the adult, will probably be troubled by anxiety dreams in which he is always in danger, thus symbolising the retribution which he fears will some day be the outcome of his sins.

That these children are never in disgrace, that they are always anxious to do the right thing, that they behave as "little ladies" and "gentlemen" and never disgrace their

parents, does not affect the issue. Though they have apparently accepted the parents' standards, their Unconscious Mind resents the domination of their ego and their lack of spiritual freedom; but this is not expressed in any obvious way, because of fear of or affection for the parents. Nevertheless, the conflict between the Conscious and the Unconscious is there, and some outlet must be found.

When these children go to school, yet another ordeal has to be faced. Their conscientiousness drives them to work harder than other children. Their work is always well done. They undertake all sorts of responsibilities, and wear themselves out in doing them. They seem to be haunted by the fear of failing in their duties to parents, to teachers and, if they come from a religious home, to God. Driven on by this over-conscientiousness they undertake so much that eventually a nervous breakdown follows. This breakdown is not due so much to overwork, as to unconscious mental conflicts.

These are the children who often develop into adults who never seem happy except when they are overworking; who undertake so many responsibilities that many cannot be properly done; who sometimes neglect their home and nearest duties for obligations which they think they owe to strangers. These are the children who often become victims of "obsessional neuroses" in adult life, and become ridiculously concerned about dirt and germs; or who cannot help worrying about whether they have locked the door or turned off the light, etc.

We need to be careful, therefore, not to over-emphasise moral issues, not to read moral significance into normal childish acts, not to uphold impossible standards of conduct that are contrary to the needs and capacities of normal childhood. By doing these things we lead the child to feel that life is a burden, that the adult expects him to carry moral responsibilities which he fears he will find too heavy. All this leads to an excessive sense of guilt in relation to the ordinary and often

trivial mishaps of everyday life. This over-conscientiousness that begins in childhood may express itself in other ways in adolescence. A typical instance is the difficulty experienced in making contacts with the opposite sex.

NERVOUS HABITS

Other significant signs of nervous strain are the habits of nail-biting, tics (spasmodic movements of the face or other parts of the body), stammering, vomiting, bed-wetting and thumb-sucking, and, in many instances, asthma. All these forms of behaviour may appear occasionally with normal children, but they are, on the whole, signs of emotional strain.

As was mentioned earlier, children of this type react over-intensely to stimuli and situations that may not cause any unusual response from other less sensitive children. Shock, resulting from some disturbing experience, may start any of these habits, but this is not a very common cause. In the great majority of cases, the nervous strain is due to more or less permanent conditions. Of these the *parent-child relationship* is the most outstanding. Children who have become over-dependent upon the mother, and are, therefore, too fearful of life, are particularly prone to these forms of behaviour. The impatient, over-strict father (or mother) keys the child up to expect the worst. The sense of insecurity of life, the constant fear of consequences, play havoc with the child's nervous system, and predisposes him to all kinds of undesirable behaviour.

In other cases the strain may be due to a sense of inferiority which is constantly played upon by other members of the family or at school. The child who is in any way unhappy or lonely may, according to his temperament and age, express his distress by any of these physical symptoms. To punish the child, to criticise him or ridicule him for such habits is not only futile but cruel. He would not be treated thus if he had contracted some physical disease. A doctor

would be called in, the case would be diagnosed, and treatment recommended in conformity with the cause.

Most nervous troubles in childhood are symptoms of mental and emotional dis-ease, contracted not from strangers or from outside and uncontrollable sources, but probably through situations existing in the home itself. When the cause is realised, it should be removed, so far as it lies in human power to do so. Sometimes the cause is said to lie in the fact that the parent has the same habit—e.g. nail-biting—or habit spasms. Undoubtedly this may have some influence, but very often, because the child has inherited the emotional pattern of the parent, he tends to form the same habits. Were the child removed during infancy from the parent, a different habit might develop.

When any of these signs of nervous tension appear in young children, the full responsibility for overcoming them lies with the parents, who should ignore them and try to help the child by creating an atmosphere that will counteract and gradually overcome his sense of strain and insecurity. Older children, however, could play a part in their own cure, if someone (preferably a stranger) in whom they have confidence were to give them the opportunity to express openly their irritation and resentment, and would then explain the situation to them. They should be encouraged to realise that they do these undesirable things when they are strained or unhappy, or that the habits have developed after some period of distress. If at the same time, the children are also told that their parents were completely unaware that their ideas of what would be best for them could have such results, then the children will probably feel that the habit is not an affliction (like a hare-lip) that has descended upon them without rhyme or reason. Once the cause of the trouble is known, the sense of hopeless bondage to it is overcome, and suggestions may be made for helping the children to control the habit.

It is an interesting fact that when a child undergoes

psychological treatment for nervous strain, and is encouraged to ventilate his grievances and to indulge in various types of activity, the energy used up in mental conflict and in the indulgence of the bad habits seems to be released for achievement along other lines. During treatment the nail-biting, or stammering, or habit spasms should gradually diminish. But should the child experience another bout of resentment or emotional strain the habit will probably reappear with all its old virulence. If we can gain the cooperation of the child the cure can still be achieved, especially if we can appeal to some normal desire. For example, manicuring a child's nails after praising the appearance of some admired person's hands will often have a marvellous effect upon nail-biting.

Other less common signs of emotional strain are "compulsions," by which we mean tendencies to feel obliged to perform a certain act because some penalty would have to be paid were it omitted. Some of the compulsions shown by children are as follows: every fence has to be tapped, everything has to be done three times before it is properly finished, a daily prayer has to be repeated with exact precision, absolute truthfulness is insisted upon in the most minute details, all words on sign-boards have to be read, they feel compelled to wash their hands and face in a certain way, or to brush their teeth a certain number of times. Normal children, however, may do some of these things, such as fence-tapping, in play. This must not be confused with a compulsion which is accompanied by a sense of urgency, and by a feeling of distress if the act is omitted.

It may be difficult, or impossible, to find the source of these compulsive ideas. Sometimes the compulsion is unknown to the parents, who have no idea that the child is suffering. Children are so inarticulate, or so afraid of being laughed at, that they cannot ask for protection from themselves. When the adult does become aware of these compulsions, they should be treated as interesting and amusing

vagaries that can be discussed without fear or shame by two friendly observers, the child and the parent. Such common-sense ventilation may accomplish wonders.

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary to leave the home as the cause of nervousness, and to look at the school, which may play a big part in the development of mental strain. When forty, fifty or sixty children are herded in one room under a single teacher, how are they to have the attention that allows each individual to advance at his own particular rate so that he is not "pushed" or held back? In addition to the physical harm done to the child through this overcrowding and lack of space for proper movement, there is the physical strain caused by the heavy weight of books carried to and from school. The long school day, followed by hours of homework, places the children under the burden of a "working week" that their fathers would not tolerate. And the school work? Not enough thought is given in many schools to balancing the syllabus so that the children may develop equally their senses and manual skill. Always the undue emphasis upon mental absorption rather than upon creative activity! And what opportunity is provided for the normal social needs in the schoolroom? Except in rare schools, the children are not allowed to speak to one another, to discuss their work, to help a weaker class-mate during lessons. Is it any wonder that many children find school such a cramping and uninteresting experience that they become "difficult," nervy or dull?

Improved as are many schools and much school method, we are still paying huge taxes for the upkeep of an institution that uses antiquated methods that would not be tolerated in any other department of life. Each generation pays the price for this in the shattered lives, the ruined nervous systems of many children who are unable to fit themselves into this scheme of mass-production. When in addition to these things the child has a teacher who arouses his fear through punishment, undue criticism or ridicule, there are

quite enough factors to change any sensitive child into a nervous one.

When children show a dread of school, when nervous symptoms such as disturbed sleep, lack of appetite, bad temper, etc., appear, it is the duty of the parents to investigate the situation and, where necessary, make every effort to have the position remedied.

It is stated that the incidence of insanity, of emotional instability, is on the increase among all civilised nations as the result of the rush, the intense competition, the complexity of modern life. Such being the case, children should be guarded against all undue strain. If they are helped towards a happy, healthy and secure childhood they have a sound foundation for the stresses of adult life. But if they are not so prepared, if they are allowed to grow up under conditions that are liable to lead to nervousness in any form, then we are committing a crime, not only against the individual child, but against the community, which is already heavily penalised by the number of the emotionally unstable children and adults who have to be maintained in institutions such as asylums and gaols.

We have it very largely in our own hands whether the number of nervous and neurotic people in the world is to increase or not, since the great majority of nervous cases are the products of controllable conditions of home and school, and not of an inescapable heredity. It must be realised that parental anxiety is responsible for much childish "nerviness," and that the use of a certain amount of casualness and a large amount of common sense may act, not only as a preventive, but as a cure.

CHAPTER IX

TYPICAL PROBLEMS OF THE ADOLESCENT

CONTINUITY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

THERE is a tendency on the part of many people to think of adolescence as a stage of human development that is almost complete in itself. Undoubtedly it has very definite characteristics and is accompanied by its own special problems; nevertheless, it is as clearly related to the preceding stages of childhood as it is to that of adulthood.

We should always remember that the stages of human development make up a continuous whole; that each stage is both an effect and a cause. Infancy, which we shall take for convenience as the first stage, leads on to childhood, which leads to puberty. Puberty takes the individual on to adolescence, which ultimately becomes adulthood, which in itself has a number of more or less definite stages with their accompanying problems. Rose Macaulay's novel, *Dangerous Ages*, is an interesting and amusing expression of this last fact.

The merging of one stage into another is so gradual as to be imperceptible, until one day we wake up to the fact that the baby is a baby no longer, that the child is a youth. But our sudden awareness is due only to our lack of observation, not to any sudden change in the child. For this reason we must bear very clearly in mind that our wisdom, or otherwise, in meeting the needs and problems of the earlier stages of the child's life is laying the foundation, either good or bad, of adolescence. So we may say that adolescence is being prepared for, even in infancy. If the child is spoilt and over-indulged, the normal difficulties of adolescence will be intensified. If, on the other hand, the child is dominated

too much, other adolescent problems are inevitable. The child who has been brought up in the earlier years with sympathetic understanding, has a background that is of inestimable value in the development of a normal adolescence. But this does not mean that problems will not arise, because they are in some degree to be expected at that stage of development. Many young people fortunately seem to pass through this period fairly easily; to others it is a time of storm and stress.

THE PROBLEM OF ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood, the period when the child dies and the man is born. The onset of the period is indicated by the physical changes that take place. Accompanying the physical changes there may be psychological disturbances, due to new emotions, new attitudes, new capacities that make demands upon the child's powers of adjustment, not only to his environment, but to his own body and his as yet unrealised self.

It is strange that among civilised people there is no general recognition of the need to instruct the adolescent about himself and the world he has to meet as youth and man. We could learn much from primitive peoples who, in the initiation ceremonies of the tribes, teach the young people the meaning of their bodily changes and the responsibility that now rests upon them to live in accordance with the laws and customs of the tribe. The problem of adolescence is, therefore, how to help the boy and girl to an understanding of themselves and to a realisation that they must now definitely prepare themselves for shouldering the responsibility—physical, moral and social—of their own lives. If this is necessary among primitive peoples, how much more is it needed for the complex demands of modern life.

PHYSICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ADOLESCENCE

In one brief chapter it is impossible to deal with the physiology of adolescence save in a very sketchy way. We can only select certain points that have the most obvious bearing upon the particular problem of understanding the psychological difficulties of the young people.

Adolescence usually begins somewhere about the age of thirteen, but this is not constant, as climatic conditions, nutrition, heredity and other factors may delay or hasten it.

It is normally a period of greatly accelerated growth. Some interesting investigations into the child's increase in weight and height show that the child who is tall before adolescence tends to become taller than the average when adult, the greatest relative increase in height being up to $14\frac{1}{2}$ years for boys and $12\frac{1}{2}$ years for girls, though they continue to grow until 21 and 18 years respectively. At the same time children who are short before adolescence tend to be shorter than the average as adults. There are, however, individual cases, where children who have been average in height up to adolescence suddenly take a spurt and increase to more than the normal height.

In weight the gain for the average girl occurs between 11 and 15, for boys between 14 and 16. The weight tends to increase throughout adolescence, but at a slower rate after 19 years.

There are also definite skeletal changes. The contour of the face alters; there is a marked change in the relative proportion of head to trunk, and trunk to legs and arms. There is also an increase in the length of the long bones of the legs and in the size of hands and feet.

An increase in the circumference of the body is noticeable at adolescence, due to two types of tissue: adipose tissue, especially in girls, and muscle tissue proper. This occurs between 12 and 15 years in girls, and between 15 and 16 years in boys.

These physical changes involve many practical issues, since they have an effect upon the child's behaviour. Muscular tissue and bones do not grow at the same rate, with the result that bodily control is very difficult and the adolescent may be in constant trouble for being clumsy and awkward. This period of unco-ordinated movement lasts sometimes for several years, and the boy or girl is not helped by the scolding or teasing that he or she receives. Adolescence is a sensitive period; the child has a great desire to be socially successful and yet he is just the opposite. The natural difficulties are increased by the emotional disturbances aroused through fear of doing the wrong thing, of being "gawky" or clumsy. This fear may be shown, not only in the restless movements of hands and feet, but in the development of certain nervous habits such as twisting buttons, adjusting ties, patting the hair or fumbling with any object available. If these difficulties were met with understanding instead of ridicule or annoyance, the adolescent would not only get over them more quickly, but much of the unhappiness and mental strain characteristic of the period would be avoided.

Other problems associated with this rapid growth are due to fatigue. Stooping, for example, may be the result of fatigue, though in some cases it may be due to too prolonged sitting at desks, lack of games and physical supervision, or the desire not to appear tall, if increase in height is very rapid. Adults would help the young people greatly if they would realise that the rapidly growing child who is putting on weight or growing very tall, or the adolescent who is unfortunate enough not to be growing in the normal degree, absolutely shrink from the personal remarks made by relations and friends of the family.

In reference to fatigue one must point out that at this period, when the young folk need a lot of rest and relaxation, they are frequently working at very high pressure. If they are at school they are working for public examinations, are

studying late at night and rising early in the morning. Sometimes all exercise is sacrificed. Is it any wonder that the greatest percentage of nervous breakdowns among children occur at this age—the age when they need greater physical care than at any other since the pre-school years, especially if they are subject to any mental strain?

The amount and kind of exercise taken need care also, because there is a great disparity in the rate of increase in the size of the heart and that of the blood-vessels. Strenuous sport and sports training need to be done with the greatest care, but unfortunately neither parents nor teachers realise always the harm that may be done through enthusiasm. The understanding of the importance of planning a proper rest and activity programme for the pre-school child is steadily growing; it is as necessary for adults to understand how to plan for the proper rest and activity of the adolescent. The adolescent also needs a properly balanced diet and a much larger amount of food. With all these considerations observed, many of the difficulties of adolescence would be diminished.

SEX DEVELOPMENT

But of all physical changes, those due to the development of the sex glands are the most important because of their effect upon the child's mental and emotional life. At puberty, before adolescence has arrived, boys and girls should be told of the imminence of the changes, because they can then accept the facts objectively and without emotional disturbance. By puberty we mean that period "when the sexual organs become capable of their reproductive function, and begin their work of creating the secondary sex characters. In the case of a girl it is the period when menstruation begins; in the boy it is the occasion when the testicles start to secrete seminal fluid. . . . There is the general maturing of the form, together with the growth of the pubic hair and the acquisition of the power of parenthood." In the chapter,

"The Sex Education of the Child" (*The Young Child and His Parents*), the need for preparing the child for understanding himself and his body was emphasised. He or she should be given the necessary information before the first signs of adolescence appear, because if the information is given after adolescence has arrived it may arouse the sexual impulse and stimulate desire. We should try to satisfy the mind without unnecessarily causing emotional disturbance.

SEX PROBLEM OF MODERN YOUTH

We should do all we can to eliminate unnecessary difficulties for the adolescent; civilisation has created more than enough. When parenthood is possible and sex desire can be experienced, the normal and natural result should be mating, though it should be postponed until complete maturity has been attained. "In primitive tribes and earlier civilisations the onset of puberty marked the period at which the child took his place with adults, regardless of the fact that growth and development continued for some time after this period. Today social conditions and the ideals of the group make adolescence a prolonged period rather than a definite point at which manhood or womanhood begins; but the myth of a sudden and violent change at adolescence is still believed by the mass of mankind. Among primitive peoples the boy passing into manhood was supposed to change suddenly from the estate, thoughts, attitude, beliefs and activities of a child and to think and behave only as a man" (Arlitt). Consequently the mating of the youth takes place when he becomes capable of establishing heterosexual relations. In modern society the mating or marrying age has been postponed, especially among the more educated and privileged classes. Among the poorer people it is not unusual to have husband and wife both under 21, but as we go up the social scale and the standard of living becomes higher, marriage does not take place until later.

What is the adolescent to do? Is he or she to have no satis-

faction for his or her physical sex needs until he or she is of a marriageable age or in a suitable financial position? Whatever may be our own private opinion on the matter, we have to face the problem as it exists today. The adolescents live in a very different world from that of even thirty or forty years ago. Added to the postponement of the marrying age until after maturity has been attained, there are other factors that make sexual control even more difficult.

To begin with, in the Victorian Age there was a stability of ideas, of standards, that no longer exists. People were so sure that they knew what was right and wrong, there was no question as to what was meant by the "moral law"; few questioned the correctness of religious teachings, or if they did, they kept it secret. Where is this certainty today? Half a century ago it was correct to be orthodox, but today people of all ages above the age of youth will tell you they do not *know* what to believe. They have cast off many of the beliefs of their youth, but have found nothing definite to replace them. The young people cannot but be influenced by the moral chaos of their elders who so often have nothing to give them as a life-guide. Though there is in many quarters a definite return to a more stable attitude of mind, nevertheless the general uncertainty of the modern world, its atmosphere of insecurity, does not create any very deep feeling of respect for the beliefs, customs, conventions and moral attitudes of an older generation. Hence the young people growing up today uphold what they call modern or advanced views on those aspects of life that were once bound by orthodox teaching.

This is obvious in relation to sex. The following paragraph, taken from Meyrick Booth's *Youth and Sex*, would apply to all civilised countries today.

"Those who are acquainted, at first hand, with the conditions obtaining in England of today, know that the sentiments of 'the new morality' are heard, not only in the 'advanced' circles of London, but just as frequently from

the lips of factory girls, young engineers or shop-assistants in Lancashire, Yorkshire or the Midlands. The true significance of this revolt (against monogamy and the family) to the parents and education is very far indeed from being adequately realised. *It is the central factor in the modern problem of Youth and Sex.* . . . Jack has been told at home, at school and in church or chapel that boys and girls should lead 'pure lives' or in other words refrain from having sexual intercourse before marriage.

"At the age of, say, seventeen (or earlier) he begins to read for himself and to go to the theatre or cinema. He at once meets the view that chastity is 'out-of-date,' 'Victorian,' 'injurious to health' and so forth, and he is told, either directly or indirectly, that temporary sex unions are not only 'modern' but indeed essential to ~~health~~ health and moral development. It may be he will not accept the views thus put before him. But even if he does not, the important fact is that *his life outlook is rendered insecure*. He now realises that there are different opinions on these vital matters, and his confidence in a simple 'right and wrong' is shattered. Those who are in touch with youth know that what I say is true. . . . Although the older generation may find it hard to believe, tens of thousands of our best boys and girls, now passing through the most critical period of their lives, have entirely lost their bearings in a moral sense; this applies even to those who come from homes where the traditional values are respected."

From my own experience I can vouch for the truth of this viewpoint. Once an adolescent girl from a good home came to me in great distress to know whether she ought to have sex relations with the lad she had as her special friend. He said she was foolish not to, but she felt she did not want it. I pointed out the social and psychological implications of the whole situation, with the result that she decided against pre-marital intercourse.

That a large number of the older generation refuse to face

the facts does not make the situation easier; nor does the attitude of another group that modern youth is headed for perdition. Until this problem of a moral crisis is faced, no solution is possible. And it cannot be solved by trying to enforce a point of view by arguments which no longer hold power over the younger generation. Modern youth is neither immoral, vicious nor depraved. "It is not its fault if dissolution of values resulting from modern science, and thought in general, leaves it with no firm ground on which to stand." *They do not really want this unrestricted freedom, they are quite prepared to give up the intense individualism that is so characteristic of the great majority of youth today, as is seen in the popularity of the Youth Movements in many countries. What youth needs is a good and true reason, and an objective, if it is to control its natural impulses. It wants the way to be pointed out, because there is no doubt that the deeper desire of youth is to feel the growth of its own power, its own worth; and to achieve this it needs the help of the older generation.* Seniors, whether parents or teachers, do not help if they try to uphold the viewpoint of their own generation without realising that neither thoughts nor ideals can persist without change; nor do those help who leave youth entirely to its own devices without any guidance at all, a serious omission of which many parents today are guilty.

Sexual restraint for the adolescent is necessary, but how is it to be achieved? A difficult question, since one cannot give any one specific answer that may be applied to every case. It is possible to give suggestions which, however, would have to be applied to each case according to its character. Perhaps the fundamental thing is to cultivate from the beginning a normal attitude to sex, so that it is not surrounded from the earliest days with the attraction of the mysterious and the forbidden. On the other hand, we do not want the children to grow up with the idea that they are merely natural animals, and can indulge their sex impulses with the casualness of cats and dogs. Sex, while regarded as a normal

impulse, needs to be associated with human values and recognised as of vital importance to civilisation. The cult of sex as an amusement, divorced from æsthetic and ethical values, and made safe by contraceptives, is neither wholesome nor desirable since it completely ignores the evolution of man along super-animal lines—along just those lines that have given man his dignity, his spiritual, æsthetic and moral achievements. No matter how one generation may disagree with the ideals of another, there is always one point in common, viz. that each generation forms ideals, and that these ideals are usually indirectly if not directly concerned with a search for something higher than the immediate physical and material satisfactions.

The adolescent, in spite of his different attitude to sex, still falls in love, still idealises members of the other sex and, in a large majority of cases, still has the desire for a happy marriage that will achieve not only a home but give a sense of security, of "belonging." That the young people seem to regard marriage and its responsibilities more lightly is true, but the emotion of falling in love is still the same. *The tendency for many young people, especially the more intelligent ones, to rail against marriage is possibly due to the fact that they demand so much more from it than their parents did. They want something more than a comfortable home, they want comradeship and friendship; they fear the disillusionment that may follow marriage; sometimes they know themselves so well that they fear their own capacity to live up to the ideal of what marriage means to them; they want to keep something of the romance and sense of high adventure that they fear the daily routine of marriage may destroy. The modern adolescent is often unhealthily introspective and analytical, and consequently reluctant to take desirable risks, but his sexual follies do not necessarily show that he is any less an idealist than were his more conventional elders.*

This idealism shows in many other ways. In puberty and early adolescence it shows in hero-worship, as a rule for an

older member of the boy's or girl's own sex. This is an important stage in the child's love life, because this hero-worship if felt for the right kind of adult may have a great influence on his future ideals and attitudes to life. If, however, this "crush" or "pash" for members of the adolescent's own sex persists too long it may have a very bad effect, and act as a barrier to the normal development of the next period when their love should be transferred to a member of the opposite sex. Leaders of young people, such as Scout masters, guiders, teachers, have a big responsibility should they become the object of the adolescent's adoration. If they laugh at them, are unsympathetic or "let them down" in any way, it affects them deeply not only at the time, but may also influence them in their estimate of and attitude to others in the future. On the other hand, this hero-worship must not be encouraged or stimulated, as it causes the boy or girl to pour out still more love, which is doomed to disillusionment since it cannot, under normal conditions, get an adequate return.

In that moving play *Girls in Uniform* and in Clemence Dane's novel *Regiment of Women*, we see the devastation such a feeling can cause in a young girl's life. The older people must be wise in using their influence to stimulate the boy or girl towards wider interests and activities and towards a clearer conception of the opportunities open to them in the present and man- and womanhood in the future.

IDEALISM

Following this stage we have, as I mentioned above, that in which the adolescent falls in love with a member of the opposite sex. After this, in many cases follows a period when the idealism is carried over to a wider field, is expressed in the desire to put all the world to rights in various forms of social service, either towards a special group, or towards humanity as a whole. The adolescent's devotion to "causes"; his radicalism which grows out of his realisation of the cor-

ruption, injustice and muddle in the world, for which the older generation is responsible; his often irritating but sincere conviction that he and his generation know how to overcome all existing evils; his passionate self-sacrifice for any cause that appeals to the crusading spirit of youth: all these emotional possibilities are often running to waste in futile frivolities, in destructive and anti-social activities, simply because they are lacking the inspiration that comes from understanding leadership. The totalitarian countries had much to teach the democracies about the force that is latent in youth. Russia, Germany, Italy gained their strength through their appeal to the idealism of youth. They made the young people feel that the regeneration of their countries lay in their hands; that the willingness to endure hardship and restrictions and to sacrifice everything, even life itself, was the foundation for the ultimate building up of a great nation. Each boy and girl was taught to feel that he or she was individually necessary for the well-being and survival of the state. That this splendid spirit of youth was directed in some countries towards undesirable ends does not affect the point under consideration—that "the vision splendid," the idealism of adolescence, is there, if we only knew how to call it forth.

SELF-ASSERTION

Some people may think that this is all rather absurd, that most adolescents show none of this spirit, that they are utterly selfish, entirely lacking in thought and consideration for others. This is true, and it is interesting to notice how these two opposing characteristics may exist in the one person, side by side. The boy or girl who is self-sacrificing, thoughtful and willing to go to almost any length to help in some cause that appeals to his or her emotions, may be most unpleasantly selfish and troublesome at home. Which is the true personality? It is safe to say both are true, but what the adolescent is outside the home he probably would

have been in the home had he been treated differently. Let me explain what I mean.

In all human beings there are certain innate tendencies or urges which cause the individual to act in certain specific ways. Some of these tendencies appear more particularly in the early years, some at adolescence; while others show throughout the whole of life. The tendency towards self-assertion is one that operates at all ages, and if legitimate opportunities for its expression are not given, the normal difficulties that arise are intensified.

As I have mentioned many times, children are often held back from developing the independence that is necessary for them, even at the earliest age. Adults not only persist in doing things for them which they could very well do for themselves, but they make decisions, exercise judgment, try to control and dominate the child's mind and emotions for years after he should have been allowed to think out and decide many courses of action for himself. When the child reaches adolescence, the need for independence that belonged to his pre-school years is infinitely greater, but unfortunately is still discouraged. I have seen parents treating children of fourteen and older as though they were still little ones; telling them what to wear; giving them no say in the selection of their clothes; ordering them to do this and that; refusing to give them freedom in the choice of friends, of leisure occupations; worse still, ridiculing their ideas, finding fault with their behaviour in front of others, and doing a hundred and one things that not only hurt their pride but also make them feel very strongly that they are not appreciated. Is it any wonder that under these circumstances adolescents often show a very bad side at home, while to the outside world they show a very different nature?

If parents treat their children correctly from the beginning, giving them the independence they are capable of using, teaching them to exercise their own powers of thought and judgment more and more as the years pass, gradually

extending their freedom of action with their increasing age, loosening the reins of control little by little as they become more capable of self-government, if they do all this, the unpleasant assertiveness and rudeness of the adolescent will not be nearly as prevalent. After all, boys and girls of fourteen are no longer children, they are young people approaching adulthood and wanting their new status to be recognised. At school, at friends' houses, in their social groups, they are accepted at a different valuation, they are thanked for what they do, they are given responsibilities and praised for their efforts; in fact, they gain attention by showing their more attractive selves, for the expression of which they are often given little opportunity at home. The adolescent craves attention, and if he cannot gain it by legitimate methods, he will use any means. For this reason children who receive little praise or encouragement will sulk, be rude or adopt certain mannerisms that are quite effective in making their family or teacher attend to them.

IS THE OLDER GENERATION ALWAYS RIGHT?

Closely allied to this assertiveness is the adolescent's conviction that *he* knows everything and older people nothing. When adolescence arrives, the critical faculty awakens, and the child who accepted perhaps the wisdom and "rightness" of his parents and teachers without question begins to look at them with critical eyes. Do they really know everything? Aren't the things they do not know more numerous than those they do? Is it necessary to accept their standards and ideas when others have different and perhaps more attractive ones? With all their knowledge, have they made such a success of the world in general? Are they always honest, truthful, just? Do they try to guide their own lives by the same standards and principles they uphold for others? Such are many of the questions the adolescents ask themselves consciously and unconsciously, and the answers that they give cause them to adopt their characteristic attitude of

superiority to the older generation. Unless one remembers one's own moral and intellectual snobbery at this age, and keeps one's sense of humour in the foreground, one is liable to become very irritated by the self-satisfied superiority of youth.

NEED FOR PARENTS TO DEVELOP

One of the finest women I know, and one who has been a particularly successful mother, has never had this problem to face with her family. I remember going to see her many years ago on the day the youngest child had gone to a school, not to a Kindergarten. After she had told me this, she added these words, which I have never forgotten: "My last baby has gone. I have to reconcile myself to the idea that from now on I become less and less needed in the children's lives. They will lead their own lives more and more with every year. Now I have to decide what I shall do with my own life. Of course, there are all the daily things to do for them still, but I am not going to sit down and let them regard me as a back number, and thus arouse that attitude of mingled pity and contempt that so many young people have for their parents. If they have their interests, I shall have mine, so that my mind remains alert; and even if I don't know the same things as they do, they will respect me for what I do know."

She attended lectures, read widely, took up her music again. She found she was not able to continue all she began, the days were too short; but she accomplished a good deal, and encouraged her children to talk to her about the studies that interested them. The consequence is that she and her children have been and still are real friends. There has never been any suggestion of superiority or condescension on the part of the children towards her, because they have respected her intelligent, active interest in all their concerns, even though their actual knowledge far surpasses hers. At each stage of their development she gave them the independence they were capable of exercising, but she taught

them also that consideration and thought for others are essential in human relations. Although there have been disputes and quarrels, as there always must be, there was, nevertheless, an atmosphere about this home of which every visitor was immediately aware. Needless to say, there was definite co-operation between both parents, though the mother took the lead. It is this mother's sense in realising that, if her children moved on, she must not stand still that has done much to form the basis of their very happy relationship.

Parents must face the fact that no generation has the right to assert that it has accumulated all wisdom possible. Age and wisdom are not by any means synonymous. The older generation should try to see things from the viewpoint of the younger, even though the two may not always agree. Here we come to another of those points that may cause such bad feeling between parents and adolescents. The younger ones are beginning to think about all kinds of questions—social, religious, political. The typical elderly remark: "You are talking nonsense! When you are my age, or when you are older, you will learn a bit of sense," is infuriating to a boy or girl who is trying to understand life and is struggling to see truth and reality. When they begin to exercise their young minds they should be encouraged to talk as man to man, and their mistakes should be discussed intelligently, instead of being ridiculed. Sometimes the mistakes are not theirs. One lad I know who has a very intelligent father said to me one day: "You know, dad's wonderful! He is always so interested to hear what I am thinking, and he never makes me feel I'm a fool—though I sometimes realise later I have been." This indicates a very satisfactory father-son relationship.

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

There is no aspect of the adolescent's development that has been more fraught with difficulties than that of his

religious beliefs. While there are many definitions of religion, they have, as a rule, one common point, that the individual depends upon a power outside himself; it gives a sense of security beyond that of any other experience; and it is usually associated with a moral code, a set of high ideals of conduct. There are many differences of opinion as to when the child should have his first religious teaching, but most psychologists believe that it first becomes an intimate and real part of the child's life at adolescence.

It is not at all strange that this should be so, because at no other period have there been so many factors in the child's life developing a sense of insecurity. There are, first of all, the difficulties created by his physical growth: his inability to control his limbs as he would: the changing of the body itself; his emotional disturbances, the causes of which he cannot fathom because he is at one moment in a state of happiness and well-being and the next in one of depression almost of despair. Why? He cannot understand all the changes that seem to be taking place within him, over which he has no control. Religion, therefore, gives him great help and consolation and an intense feeling of security, especially if he happens to be of the type that needs some force outside himself upon which to lean. It is interesting to know that more people become converts to religion and members of a church during adolescence than at any other period. It is during adolescence also that many young people get their first serious disillusionment as regards human nature, and the shock of the experience makes them desire all the more to feel the power of some spiritual force that can never betray them.

On the other hand, there are many adolescents who, at this period, throw aside all adherence to a religious creed as the result of a growing doubt about the truth of what they have been taught and have hitherto accepted without question.

CAUSES OF RELIGIOUS DOUBT

What are the most common causes of this change of attitude that arouses so much distress in parents who have themselves never had any doubts, or at any rate seem to have forgotten them? First of all, it should be recognised that there are certain personalities which never feel the need for religion in its orthodox sense. They may be intensely spiritual, by which I mean conscious of the worth and beauty of other than material values in life. They may be idealists working with absolute selflessness for the greater happiness and well-being of others. They may live a life inspired by the highest ethical code, but religion as related to Church and creed they do not need. If a child is of that type, he is going to wake up to the fact at adolescence. It may come one night when he is about to say his prayers, and he suddenly thinks: "To whom am I praying? I don't feel conscious of any answering spirit. Have I ever felt God is here and that He is interested in me? What good are my prayers doing? Is it honest or sincere to say words without any feeling behind them?" I know one adolescent who, as the result of such inner questioning, never prayed again and never regretted the decision. And, so far as one can tell, it has had no detrimental effect on a well-balanced, useful and definitely idealistic life.

Other young people come to such an attitude of negation through intellectual or emotional shock. They may find, for instance, that people who are staunch upholders of religion act in crooked or devious ways, that they are untruthful, insincere, unreliable. They then do as older people do, confuse the idea with the exponent; and because the people who uphold certain points of view do not act in accordance with them, they maintain that the ideas are as wrong as their followers. Every generation has to pass through this experience—its effect depends upon the temperament and previous education of the child.

Another source of doubt, and still a very common one today, arises from the adolescent coming into contact with scientific principles that are in conflict with the doctrines he has been taught. He finds men and women who lead fine lives teaching those scientific theories; he meets young people of his own age who have either been brought up on or who have adopted a scientific point of view that contradicts in every way most of what he has been taught. The conflict aroused by this doubt can be one of the most painful experiences of human life, and the youth who is passing through it needs someone older and wiser and very understanding to help him. If he has not, then in discarding the non-essentials he is liable to throw aside the ethical code, the feeling of the reality of things unseen, and the sense of personal responsibility that can be retained when other ideas have been rejected.

Lastly, the adolescent may discover that, in spite of prayers, his success and ability to meet the demands of life depend upon his own capabilities; that unless he helps himself no outside help seems to avail. If the child has been over-protected and taught to depend upon external aid, either from his parents or from religion, the realisation that his success or failure depends primarily upon himself is liable to come as a great shock.

But what is intensely interesting to a student of adolescence is that these young people who throw over conventional religion so often adopt a social or political creed with an absolutely religious fervour, and their new belief supplies them with the outlet they need for their emotions, their idealism and their desire for group thinking.

DEVELOPMENT OF PERMANENT INTERESTS

Another point of great importance is that it is during the early period of adolescence that the child begins to develop his permanent interests. This is partly due to the fact that his personality is now beginning to take on its ultimate pat-

tern. Until now he has been a child; his personality has been gradually developing; his interests have changed frequently, and he has not as yet discovered in himself any special ability. At adolescence boys and girls begin to show what they will be as men and women.

It is most unfortunate that the majority of children leave school when they are still in a very plastic stage, before they know what they want to do with their lives and before any very accurate estimate can be made of their abilities. In school they have gained mastery over the elementary tools of knowledge, the three R's; but they have not been introduced to the endless avenues of interest in which they could find some channel of self-expression. If our schools were more up-to-date, if the curriculum were as wide and varied as it should be, then even at fourteen the children would have learnt to enjoy books, crafts and art in many forms; whereas in the vast majority of schools they have made acquaintance with only the dry bones of knowledge.

This brings me to the point discussed in the chapter "The Child and His Recreation," that if the adolescent has varied interests, whether they are for physical skills, for art, for science of any kind, for music, for dancing (not ballroom dancing only), for books dealing with many subjects (not merely fiction); if he has interests which are not just ways of passing time, but are indulged in because they are loved, then the adolescent has an avenue into which he can direct his sex energy, and in this way find emotional satisfaction. If, as is often the case, the boy and girl, and later the man and woman, are obliged from necessity to do work that they do not like, it is very necessary that they should have some hobby, some recreational activity, into which they can throw themselves wholeheartedly. It is those people who have not found any real interests who are bored with life, who pass all their leisure time in dancing, playing cards, attending races, cocktail parties, pictures theatres and so on. These pastimes are not undesirable in themselves, but they are not of suffi-

cient value to merit the important part they play in many lives.

I have selected only a few phases of the subject of adolescence that are of most general interest, leaving the greater part of the matter untouched. I have, I hope, given you a clue to the adolescent problem, and will conclude with this summary. It is a period of great instability, the adolescent emotions are liable to run in many directions and to change from moment to moment. This emotional instability shows in their quick alterations of mood, their extreme points of view, their conventionality (e.g. in dress), their radicalism in thought. In spite of their assertiveness, they are extremely sensitive to the opinions of others and very uncertain as to themselves. They often seem lazy and apathetic; a condition possibly due to physical causes, but frequently due to lack of congenial and satisfying avenues of self-expression. They may lead hectic lives, be sexually indulgent, drink too much and exhibit thoroughly decadent tendencies; all this does not necessarily indicate inherent degeneracy, it may have its roots in foolish, indulgent or mentally and emotionally starved up-bringing. In some ways utterly selfish, they can be admirable in their thoughtfulness and self-sacrifice.

To get the best from these contradictory young people, these things are needed:

1. They must feel they are trusted.
2. They must be given responsibility.
3. They must be treated as intelligent people capable of thinking rationally.
4. They should feel secure in the consciousness of a calm and consistent authority in the background.
5. They should have the companionship of young people of both sexes.
6. They should have constructive and worthwhile recreational activities.
7. They need a home in which parents co-operate to give them wise guidance, so that with increasing maturity

they learn to overcome their own obstacles and grow into a more complete control of their own emotions and behaviour.

As adolescence is the last stage of childhood, the best preparation for it is a happy, sympathetic upbringing in early years. If all children were to grow up from infancy physically, mentally and emotionally healthy, then the nations today would not be troubled by many of their greatest problems, which are, in many cases, the result of the lack of mental hygiene in childhood and youth.

POINTS FOR THOUGHT

1. Recall your own feelings at the personal remarks you had to endure about your appearance at adolescence. How can you protect your children from similar experience?
2. If you are having any trouble with children of adolescent age, can you trace any possible cause of the trouble in past or present conditions at home?
3. Can you find any ways by which your adolescents may be helped to overcome any wrong attitude they have developed?
4. At what age should the adolescent girl be given a dress allowance? How could she be helped to budget?
5. What are typical situations that unnecessarily arouse the adolescent's resentment?
6. What opportunities does the average home provide for developing the adolescent's self-respect in contradistinction to assertiveness?
7. If a girl of fourteen wants to begin using rouge and powder and a boy of the same age wants to smoke, how could you meet the problem?
8. What do you think are the causes for the widespread drinking among adolescents? How could you try to guard your children against this undesirable habit?
9. What do you think would be the value of a short course

of lectures on child-management for the senior girls in schools?

10. Do you think that the interest in the other sex is stronger in the adolescent boy or girl? Do you think the degree of this interest is influenced in any way by the number of other interests possessed by the boy or girl?

CHAPTER X

THE CHILD AND HIS RECREATION

WHAT is wrong with so many men and women of today? Why are they so afraid of time in which there is "nothing to do"? Why do they go to the pictures so often? Why do they play cards night after night? Why do they drink? Take drugs? Indulge in so many sexual excesses? Surely it is, in most cases, because of the poverty of their inner life; because they have found no channel into which they can pour their whole personality, thereby satisfying a natural emotional need. In other words, they have not learnt in childhood and youth how to play, how to re-create themselves. They see life passing without having ever fully lived.

This is the tragedy of civilisation—that the work of man no longer satisfies his play impulse, his creative impulse. Joseph Lee, the great American who began the play-ground movement in the United States, wrote some years ago: "Since play is the most deeply rooted instinct in human nature, the ideal is to have man's work satisfy his play instinct. But civilisation upsets theory, sidetracks play abruptly at the point where the child becomes the man. There is no place in nine-tenths of industry and business for play. The artist and the professional man can play while they work (this is because they are doing what they most want to do), but with the foolproof machines and organised business, the majority of people must live on the margin left outside their work, or die. . . . The evil for the average boy (or girl) of apprentice age is not merely that he will not, when he grows up, live a full human life, but that he can never grow up at all." Ideally, work should be creative or productive of something within the capacity of the individual.

But, instead, it becomes only a means of making a living, a drudgery. Recreation, therefore, becomes a necessity for mental health.

"But children play. They are always doing something. Why do they find time hangs so heavily when they grow older?" you may ask. Is it not that children have time to play, to express themselves? But once they go to school and get caught in the educational machine, which is primarily concerned with memory cramming and with grinding out examination results, the play-spirit gradually dies. In some cases the creative spirit lives on, in some schools creative work is encouraged, but these are the exceptions and not the rule.

HOW THE SCHOOL MAY DEVELOP LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES

It will be impossible for these things to change unless there is a very marked development in the understanding of the purpose of education. It should aim at equipping the child for all the demands of life, for social relations, for leisure as well as for work. Parents must cease to look upon arts and crafts, upon music and dramatic work, as waste of time. It has been found that children learn their routine subjects with greater pleasure, rapidity and ease if they have regular periods for creative work, which should permeate the whole work of the school. During the New Education Fellowship Conference held in Sydney in 1937, Dr. Happold, Headmaster of one of the fine modern English schools, gave a splendid lecture on the place of "Music Art, and Drama in the School," from which I quote the following passage:

"Every child is potentially a creator; he longs to create things, to express himself in word or form or sound. He longs, moreover, to work for the community of which he is a member. It is because arts, crafts, music and drama provide unique opportunities for developing creative abilities and engaging in community activities that they are of such great

value in the life and curriculum of the school. To neglect them, to deny this training to the child, is to thwart him, to give him an education which is essentially one-sided and unbalanced. . . .

"The function of the school, moreover, is to enable each child to discover himself, to gain that self-confidence which comes through his finding out his particular ability. To some this process of self-discovery comes through the realisation of ability in the intellectual sphere, to others it comes through realisation of ability in physical, æsthetic or manual activities.

"Training in arts, music and drama in the school is not the training of artists, musicians and dramatists. It is primarily a release of creative activity."

We have a tendency to think that imagination and æsthetic taste are special gifts sent by the gods and that only a few possess them. But anyone who has worked with children who have been given opportunities to express themselves, and to overcome the self-consciousness that has arisen through the too great emphasis laid upon the absorption of facts and second-hand knowledge, knows that all children have an innate love for and appreciation of design, of painting, of drawing and of all constructive work.

The ages from six to twelve years are the creative and imaginative period of childhood, yet in how many schools does the child pass out of it with a well-defined consciousness of the joy gained through expressing his own outlook on life, of telling others how he thinks and feels about the world in which he lives? Most exhibitions of children's art held in recent years have shown how little understanding of its value there is in this country. With rare exceptions, Australian exhibits are the most depressing indications of how little the average teacher knows of art and of child psychology. Tidy, conventional, on small bits of paper, the overwhelming majority lack joy and imagination. The children obviously put on paper what the teacher tells them to do,

with the consideration of what they know the teacher wants in the foreground of their minds. There is little or no expression of personal taste, no indication of how the child sees the world. So much of this work is done by children directed by conscientious teachers who apparently have themselves no real joy in art, no understanding of what the child needs, no sense of adventure in opening new avenues for the child's self-expression. I doubt if more than five per cent. of the children—and that is putting it very high—would ever find pleasure in pursuing their art after leaving school, either as a form of active recreation or as lovers of the creative work of others.¹

In order to develop a love of art, music, literature or drama in children there must be in pre-adolescent years little emphasis upon technique but a great deal upon self-expression. That the child does not draw or paint things as we adults see them, with realistic exactitude, does not matter. He can use a camera if that is what we want. He wishes to express *his* impression of the world, not ours. When at an early age we try to teach the child rules of perspective, theories of colour and principles of design, we destroy his joy in the activity because we are forcing him to observe the intellectual rules of adult experience, while he is still in the emotional imaginative stage of childhood. We do the same damage to a child mentally and emotionally by forcing him too early into the next stage of development and by giving him unsuitable mental food, as we would damage him physically if we tried to put him on to a meat and tea diet when he is an infant.

I have been making the teacher entirely responsible for this psychological murder, but in some cases teachers who want to do the right thing have told me that they have had difficulties with parents, who either think art and crafts are waste of time which should be devoted to the stereotyped curriculum, or that the children's free spontaneous work is

¹ Since writing this passage I have seen two art exhibitions which revealed a growing awareness and understanding of children's art.

stupid—they “pay for the children to be taught, not to do as they like.” The fact that the children learn so often to hate what they are “taught” does not seem to put things in their true light: so that the parents feel that their money is being wasted; they do not understand that their insistence on the “teaching” of art is partly to blame.

As with art, so it is with literature. Instead of learning to love the best literature the average child, upon leaving school at fifteen or even after, has learnt to hate Shakespeare and all his English text-books. Again, what is wrong? The books selected are often unsuitable for the child of the particular age, or if they are suitable are often presented so badly by the teacher that only boredom or repulsion is aroused. Here again is the same fault as with the arts. Instead of aiming at arousing the children’s feeling for literature so that they love it and want to read more, the appeal is made to intellectual analysis before they can be interested. And so another avenue of recreation for after-school days is closed.

To quote Dr. Happold again—“Art, music, literature, drama are all essential elements of a truly liberal education. Through them the child may be given emotional release, may learn to develop his creative faculties, and to see and appreciate beauty of form and word and sound; most important, to feel as well as to think. When these are present in a school, children are vivid and happy and are receiving that training which may enable them to use to the best advantage the leisure of their after-school working days.

“Much that is now done in schools is of little importance in the after-life of the child. But if at school a child has been taught to hold his part in a madrigal, to play an instrument in an orchestra, to use chisel or pencil, paint-brush or modelling tool, to act, to hear, to feel, he will have gained something of infinite worth, something which will enable him to resist the rush and standardisation and futile amusements of the modern world.”

LEISURE FOR EDUCATION

This being the value of creative activities, it is evident that not only should we have "Education for Leisure" but also "Leisure for Education." The school curriculum must not have every hour crammed with subjects that have to be learned, but there must be spare hours for individual expression, hours when the child may go to the library, the workshop, the art-room.

There are few, very few schools in Australia that have developed as fully along these lines as some of those I saw in England and the many I have read about in Europe and America. There has been, however, an obvious move in this direction, but unfortunately the subjects are too often "extras" instead of being included in the regular curriculum for all. "Hobby-hour" has been introduced into a number of schools, which again is to the good, because it gives the leisure-hour interests of the children greater importance in their eyes, since it has the encouragement of the school. No matter what financial or other difficulties there may be in making the school really a modern one, this "hobby-hour" could be and should be introduced once a week into every school, for every child. If parents demanded it as their children's right, it could be done easily.

In the schools there is a very definite awareness to-day of the need for a broader curriculum. Many Teachers' Associations as well as individual teachers are fighting for more and better school buildings and equipment—they are fighting for the spiritual rights of the next generation. They deserve more sympathy and backing than they are getting from parents generally. Many individual teachers are doing their best to develop, and not merely to instruct, their pupils.

A MODERN SCHOOL

Before leaving this aspect of education for leisure, let me give you a very brief account of Bedales School, which I

visited some years ago in England. It is a large co-educational boarding school for children from Kindergarten to University age. It is in the country, set in one of the loveliest parts of Yorkshire. About 200 children of both sexes worked and played together without any distinction of sex. Boys and girls were deliberately separated only in that they had their own sleeping houses and that football was prohibited to girls.

The class-rooms were large, airy and attractive, with pictures, flowers and objects of interest. But the most fascinating of all were the work-shops and art and craft-rooms. In one building was the carpenter's shop, a small forge and a metal-work shop. In another was a large room for pottery with a potter's wheel and a small kiln; a room where children were weaving at different looms, while others were working out designs or were engaged in batique and other branches of textile art. I saw pictures, lino-cuts, many kinds of painting and drawing on the walls and tables in another room; while a "set" for a play was being worked out by another group.

Every child had time each day for some kind of expression work, and each week set lessons on some aspect of these activities were given by the teachers. The work-shops and art-rooms were always open, so that any child who desired to go on with any work during his spare moments was able to do so. There was a period each week out of school hours during which the teacher in charge of the special activity in each room was available for consultation and advice.

In order to avoid the possibility of children wandering capriciously from one occupation to another and learning nothing, at the same time developing a very undesirable attitude of mind, every child had to spend at least one term on whatever activity he or she chose. As the children could, when entering the school, visit the work-shops freely, they had the opportunity to gain some idea of what would be of interest to them.

In speaking at different times to two young teachers, one an Oxford and one a Cambridge graduate, I asked what they thought of the results of the teaching and the policy of self-government which was encouraged in the school. Each said almost the same thing, that his desire to join the staff at Bedales had been inspired by the breadth of outlook and the range of cultural interests shown by the ex-pupils of Bedales whom they had met at their Universities. One of them added: "They are not as good at examinations, perhaps, as pupils from some of the other schools, but they had an education of the right kind that few of the others could touch." This may have been an enthusiastic over-statement, but I am sure that the idea was sound.

Though I have dwelt almost entirely on the need for the introduction of art and crafts of different kinds into the school, no curriculum is complete without good science-teaching. It is a constant source of amazement to me to hear of schools which teach physics without a laboratory or equipment. Physics and chemistry have a wonderful fascination for boys especially, as it gives them opportunities for all kinds of interesting experiments that can occupy many hours of leisure. I remember well the hours spent with my brother in an old shed, which was converted into a laboratory after my father had bought him a small laboratory equipment. Not only did it give him occupation, but it led to a tremendous interest in scientific books, and ultimately to the conviction that medicine was the only vocation that would satisfy him.

The teaching of science in well-equipped laboratories was also given its place at Bedales; not, however, for its recreational value, great as that is, but because it leads to clear and logical thinking so necessary in the modern world; and because, when taught properly, it introduces the child to the knowledge that has been responsible for man's understanding of the laws governing the universe and the world in which he lives.

All these subjects should occupy a very definite place in the education of every child after he has left the primary school as a course in basic culture, but when the boy and girl are fourteen or fifteen they should begin to show interest and ability in some particular study or group of studies. Specialisation should not be allowed before the secondary-school period, as it tends to an unbalanced education and outlook.

You may remember that a carpenter's shop and forge were also a part of Bedales equipment. This type of constructive work is very necessary for those children who are especially interested in constructional activities rather than in books or art. We know of many who seem dull and uninterested at school and yet show definite intelligence in making things. Such children, because they get no assistance at school, usually become merely "practical men" and suffer through their incapacity to grasp the theoretical and scientific principles behind their work. If opportunities are given in school, under trained teachers, children are helped to appreciate the value of theory at an age when mental habits are being formed. It must be borne in mind that the intention is not to train the children in any specific direction for the future, but to open their eyes to possibilities and to give them channels for the release of personal activities that are of value to themselves and to the community.

You are probably thinking: "Are not games and sport to have some place in this education for leisure?" Assuredly, but in a somewhat different form from that which they usually take. First of all, what is, or should be, the purpose of games and sport? Physical health and general fitness. And yet in how many schools is there adequate playing space or equipment? Physical health, fitness and efficiency should be the foundation of education for citizenship, and yet there are, in the cities at least, schools where the playgrounds are so small that the children are not allowed to run in them. Games and sport are often only for those

children who show special ability, and who will therefore help to win in the inter-class or inter-school matches. What happens, then, to the majority of the children, who may need this physical exercise even more than those who get it? They have no games at all. This comes about partly through lack of space, but primarily because the attitude towards physical training is usually too narrow.

You may have noticed how frequently today we see the phrase "Physical Education," and how rarely the older phrase "Physical Culture." This is an indication of a new conception of physical training, which does not aim at developing the body independently of the mind or vice versa. It aims at training not only the body but "the hands, the eyes, the ears of the coming generation so that they can be more self-reliant, using their leisure better, getting more out of life, having finer standards of public good taste and conduct." Few of those who control our educational system seem to realise this wide meaning of physical training, and yet you see how it fits into the educational ideal of the school as a whole. Games alone and "physical jerks" can never do all that needs to be done. Many children are bored to death by the latter, which are so mechanical that they can be done automatically and therefore have little educational value. In the most modern methods mass drill, which drags the mind and is militaristic in spirit in that the individual as an individual ceases to exist, has to a very great extent given way to the use of all kinds of physical activities in a wide variety of games, physical skills and manual work in which the individual gains a sense of mental as well as physical health through his ability to do successfully things in which he is interested.

The worship of games such as cricket, football, etc., does not lead to worth-while leisure activities for the majority, only for the few. They tend in these days, due largely to the newspapers, to glorify individuals rather than the game, to replace the amateur by the professional, and to produce

crowds of spectators while only a few perform. We see the same tendency in the thousands who never attempt to play tennis themselves but flock to see the Davis Cup players; in the thousands who flock to the stadium to watch the champion boxer or wrestler. The people who look on at these exhibitions are certainly passing the time, but that, in most cases, is all.

It is absurd for us to think of ourselves as a nation of sportsmen when but a small, a very small percentage play games themselves. We are, rather, a nation of on-lookers, passive not active sportsmen. It is most illuminating and interesting to watch skilled players, but all men and women should play some game, have some form of physical recreation in which they are active. In this way they are increasing their own powers and developing another side of their personality.

Civilised communities, or at least dwellers in towns, especially in the Western World, lose a great deal when they forsake the country dances of the peasant folk. These are a splendid source of physical recreation for men and women, the vigorous character and the skill needed for most of them quite obviating any suggestion of their being effeminate. Ordinary ball-room dancing is a poor thing in its lack of meaning and spirit, and definitely unmasculine when compared with dances such as those of the Hungarians, Russians and the Scotch.

And is surfing without its defects? There is no doubt of its benefit to those who really surf, who have their times of vigorous bathing and then their sun-bake. But look at the number of regular frequenters of the beaches who are poor physical specimens! How much time is spent in the surf, and how much in a state of semi-consciousness, doped by the sun? The splendid physique of the members of the surf-clubs indicates much more than sun-baking, with a bit of surfing, as their recreation.

CAUSES FOR PREVALENCE OF PASSIVE RECREATION

This desire for being amused, of indulging in passive pastimes, has many causes, most of which could be eliminated once we become aware of their existence. Several of these causes are inter-related, being products of certain factors in modern life.

The first and fundamental cause lies in the defects of our educational system which encourages the child for four and a half to five hours every day to sit in a passive state, mentally and physically, listening to a teacher. Moving and thinking to order is the sign of being a good child, as though obedience and passivity were synonymous with goodness! From the age of five years, when they leave the Kindergarten, until they leave school at fifteen most children have had their daily drill in submission to the thoughts and directions of others. The more widespread is national education of the stereotyped kind the less capable will the children become of thinking for themselves or of amusing themselves. Hope for the future lies in the growing awareness of parents, teachers and educational authorities of this very danger.

Another cause lies in the results of such an education upon parents themselves. Very many parents are so undeveloped, have had such slight encouragement in developing their own potentialities, that they can suggest little or nothing that will meet the play and recreational interests of even the small child. It is delightful to go into a home where the parents have imagination and resourcefulness in play, because the whole family is, as a rule, so vital; they have such fun separately and together. The really good parent knows how to give an idea to the children, but also when to withdraw (the idea having been grasped), so that the children carry on the play themselves.

When parents lack the spirit of play, when they see no possibilities of fun for the child in the home environment, the

"pictures" come as a welcome opening, so at the week-end off the youngsters go for another three hours of passivity, often of a very questionable kind. If the films they saw were suitable to their age, the results might not be so bad, because they would probably get ideas that could, later, be transformed into valuable dramatic play; but the average film story introduces the child to aspects (many most undesirable) of adult life, much of which he cannot understand. But this again is bad because it teaches the child to remain passive, to look with his physical eye, to hear words without any desire to use his intelligence to understand what he sees and hears. On the other hand, as he grows older he understands more than is good for him, and is often stimulated to precocious sexuality and sometimes to crime.

And so the child passes through his childhood, cramped, in the cities at any rate, for space, encouraged to be dependent upon the thought of others at school and at home. And then he comes to adolescence; he leaves school, he goes to work which may or may not be interesting. He earns money and now demands more freedom than he had before. His evenings and week-ends are his own. How are they to be spent? In the great majority of cases in futilities, in finding ways of passing the time. Unfortunately, the average boy and girl have no absorbing hobby; and often, even though they may know what they would like to do, little opportunity for doing it.

COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL CENTRES

There is, however, a way out of this very real difficulty, a way that is being taken in all advanced cities of the world. The establishment of Community Recreational Centres has come in response to this need. In England, the United States and certain European countries, towns with a population of only a few thousands have their supervised playgrounds, where children of all ages go during out-of-school

hours. They are also open at week-ends and during vacations and late on summer afternoons. The play-ground, as a rule, is more than an open space for games, as it has play and gymnastic equipment of different kinds suitable for children of different ages. There is a house containing a library and, according to the money available, indoor games and material for manual work, arts and crafts, etc. The play-ground is under a trained supervisor, who knows how to direct the children into activities according to their physical development and their mental needs. Usually there are also paid or voluntary helpers, who teach the children art and hand-work; assist in the choice of books; read stories to the little ones; help in dramatic work and so on. Many of these centres are open also at night for adolescents and, if there is sufficient staff, money and space, for adults as well. In this way the recreational needs of the whole community are met. For the adolescents and older groups there are, in addition to the activities already mentioned, debates, discussion groups, lectures, social evenings, dramatic and choral societies and so on. In fact, the range of the occupations is limited only by the help and money available.

The problem of how to occupy leisure is a vital one for all human beings at every age, but it assumes very great importance at puberty and adolescence. Not only have many of the young people left school, so that time occupied formerly by school and homework is now free, but there is the great uprush of energy associated with their increasing sexual maturity, and the need of avenues for its expression. The normal interest in the other sex, which also begins to develop at this time, assumes undue importance if they have no hobbies, no interests through which to express themselves. I have been asked to give lectures in country towns by groups of parents upon the subject of adolescence, because they were so concerned at the precocious sexuality of the young people. When questioning them as to the recreational facilities available, I usually found that there were none of

any value. To have a Scout or GirlGuide group is better than nothing, but that accounts for one evening of the week only. What are they to do the other nights? The local library is usually a poor affair, and even the cinema may only be open once or twice a week. Is it any wonder, then, that boys and girls, caught in the turmoil of their new emotions, with, as a rule, no sex training, with no inner resources developed, with impatient parents who forget their own feelings at the same age, with no one to understand or help them, is it any wonder that the young people go out together with, at times, most unfortunate results. But should we blame them? I often marvel that things are not much worse than they are.

In localities where recreational centres have been opened, the result has been a marked improvement in the tone of the district and a decrease in juvenile (usually adolescent) delinquency and crime. The influence of such Recreational Centres is similar in every part of the world where they have been established. It shows that misdemeanours, which by repetition become crime, are not the result of any innate evil or depravity, but are due in large measure to lack of opportunity for interesting occupations through which the individual expresses his personality, develops pride in his ability and gains social approval. The work done by the National Fitness Council in recent years is a good step forward; as is also the latest move of opening schools and the school play-grounds during the school holidays. It is a good step, but does not go far enough. In the future, much more money should be granted by the Government for the development of this work. It is really a great economic waste that schools and play-grounds should be closed for nearly three months in the year when there is need for this space for all kinds of valuable community activities, which do not exist simply because there is nowhere in which they may be carried on. When the maximum use is made of schools in after-school hours, there is no increase in expense except for staff and

equipment, and so there is much less economic waste; and the community benefits beyond the measure of mere pounds, shillings and pence.

This problem, however, is not one that affects the poor areas only. Boys and girls of the more privileged classes have exactly the same problems to meet. They have gone to more expensive schools, but their education on the whole has usually been just as poor in its freeing of their creative powers. They are often much more self-indulgent, much more exacting. They have money to spend. With what result? No delinquency, perhaps, that brings them before the children's court, but this is often only because they do not happen to be poor. The ideals of self-restraint are laughed at, and many youngsters begin their sex-life while still at school. And everyone knows how young they are when they begin to form the cocktail habit, which unfortunately does not always stop at cocktails. There is, perhaps, nothing more indicative of the deterioration of the spirit of recreation as found in ordinary social life than the fact that among large numbers of young people it is quite impossible to get up a dance if liquor is not allowed. One of the saddest and most disturbing aspects of modern life is that boys and girls in the heyday of their youth, at the time when the joy of living should be greatest, when to be young should be very heaven, think they cannot enjoy themselves without artificial stimulation of the worst kind. One thing, however, is clear; the problem will not be solved by any direct approach, but only by helping the young people throughout childhood and youth to find ways of making life worth living. All the things they do are merely ways of escape from the realisation of their own futility, their lack of purpose, their ignorance of spiritual values and, in no small measure, their consciousness of the insecurity of life today. Every town and village should try to meet this problem by urging its local council, or by forming a citizens' committee, to provide ground, to equip and staff a Community

Recreation Centre, under a trained director assisted by an adequate staff.

SOCIAL VALUES

There is, I hope, little doubt in the reader's mind that "Education for Leisure" must be given more consideration in the future than it has been given in the past. But the criticism may well be made: "Is not this emphasis upon the need for the development of personality dangerous in that it neglects social values?"

Unless the teacher or parent always bears in mind that individual rights and social responsibilities must be balanced, such a danger definitely exists. But if a school encourages the pupils towards true self-expression, no one has rights above the other. The freedom each is given develops a natural respect for the rights of others, because each child learns to realise that only as he gives consideration to his fellows will he receive it from them. Again, in most activities children want to discuss their work and the problems connected with it. They learn to co-operate with one another in work and play, because there is no clear line of demarcation between these activities. In preparing for the play that is to be produced, the scenic artists, the makers of costumes and properties (simple as they may be), the programme printers, all have to work together or the play will fail. Co-operation comes so naturally into the children's living that it is learned happily, and the evils of non-co-operation and selfishness are learned in the same way.

Schools working along these lines are distinguished from others by the fact that underlying them is a definite philosophy of life and education. They are not concerned with just a bit of the child, the memorising part of him in the school-room and the physical part of him in the playing field. They think always of the child as a whole. They believe that in all normal human beings lie potentialities for development which the school can bring to reality by giving them

opportunities for expression and training. They believe that the child can learn the art of individual living only by finding the joy of creative work, and the art of community living only through taking an active part in the organisation and control of a school community. They believe that putting work and leisure activities in water-tight compartments, with the work activities as the primary concern of the school, leads to a splitting of the child's personality and to inevitable problems when the child leaves school. They believe that every new generation is given the opportunity to create a better, happier world, but that the opportunity cannot be seized until the individual men and women learn how to be happier and therefore better. To sum up, education should be a training for the whole of life, and home and school share the responsibility of seeing that this is realised. Parents must have more patience, more understanding of the children's interests and needs; they must realise that the child's recreation is as important and needs as much consideration as his health and his schooling. Home and school must become aware of the fact that in most cases the child's character is being influenced more deeply in his recreation than in his school, for the reason that in recreation he is expressing very deep needs that are often completely untouched in the whole of his school life. The splendid exhibitions of children's hobbies held in recent years are an indication of the intelligence, initiative, resource, imagination and concentration of purpose of the young exhibitors. Why does the school not give opportunities for the exercise of these qualities, so essential for the full development of the individual and the nation? When parents and teachers wake up to the fact that an improvement in the conditions of individual and national living lies in their hands; when this new vision comes to so many that they can create a great body of public opinion to back up their demands, no government would dare to refuse to grant them, because they are in the interests of the nation as a whole, and will be needed

more than ever in the period of reconstruction which has just begun.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

A great deal can be done in the ordinary home to help the child employ his leisure hours happily. Of course, among the under-privileged this is difficult; the houses themselves are so drab, so small, that there is little space for any but the most sedentary occupations; and even for these there is little opportunity for either quiet or freedom from actual physical contact with other members of the household. The same situation exists, to a certain extent, in the ordinary flat where there is rarely a room that the children can use as their own. Nevertheless, something can be done in all but the worst cases, provided the parents are sufficiently interested in helping their children to occupy themselves happily.

A. By Example

If the parents have any hobbies or leisure-time interests, these act as a stimulus to the children. If music, books, arts or crafts are a constant source of interest and conversation between parents, the majority of children will probably develop an interest in some of these things. Even if they do not, the fact that their parents have interests outside their business or daily work makes this a normal part of living. All normal children have the desire for self-expression, and in an atmosphere which encourages normal development they will usually find some way of satisfying it. Parents should watch their children, so that they may discover their natural interests and may provide opportunities for furthering them when possible.

B. By Encouragement of Children's Interests

There is too great a tendency to leave children entirely unguided in their leisure hours. It is not necessary for us to

be with them all the time, nor to interfere with them, but they do need our interest, which can be shown by discussing their ideas and activities with them; giving them some suggestions and, if need be, our practical help. It is, however, our interest that is the principal thing, and at times our help in the procuring of necessary materials. If parents shared more often their own interests and hobbies with the children, the latter would be thrilled that their companionship was needed, and they would present fewer problems in the use and care of tools. Instead of father forbidding the children to use these, he can, and should, show them how to use them correctly. Fathers who help their children in elementary carpentry and gardening are often surprised at the skill and sense of responsibility developed. Getting the children to help in the workshop and the garden demands humour, patience and the ability to explain things in a way that a child can understand. It is, however, well worth while for the sake of the companionship which, based on common interests, will grow and deepen.

C. Developing a Love of the "Out of Doors"

City dwellers tend to think of leisure-time activities for the children as some form of sports, of arts and crafts or the playing of indoor games. They do not realise the joy that could be derived by the children if they were taught to love the out of doors. Gardening can, of course, become of absorbing interest, and if the children's observation is directed to the growth of the plants in their different seasons, and to the presence of birds and insects, harmful and otherwise, a great fund of general knowledge can be built up. This love of natural things can be further encouraged by subscribing to any of the beautiful and inexpensive natural-history papers and periodicals. All children love a visit to the Zoo, and this could be followed up by talks with the children about the things they have seen. Visits to the seaside, not merely for paddling, surfing or building castles, but

for scrambling over the rocks and examining the contents of rock-pools, collecting and classifying shells and seaweeds, etc., would give them a greater delight in the beach and would lead to something more invigorating, when they are older, than sleeping and baking in the sun.

Picnics, hiking parties or excursions may be taken by the whole family (some of the children's friends at times being invited), but these outings need not necessarily involve long journeys away from home. Chops could be grilled somewhere in the garden. If there is some country-side or garden near the home the children could be taken to look for something of interest, such as a bird's or ant's nest, the flowering or fruiting of some special shrub or tree. The value of the Scout and Guide Movements lies as much in their development of out-of-doors activities and interests as in the character training which is their ultimate aim.

Developing leisure-time activities and interests does not necessarily involve the spending of much money. It demands rather the devotion of a certain amount of time and sympathy to the building up of the child's inner resources, and encouraging him by a show of interest in what interests him.

It is very important for the child's future that the home should become the centre for happy occupation, a place where he can do worth-while things, where he may bring his friends with whom he plays and shares his interests at every stage of his life. If this is done he is rarely at a loose end, and is thus being guarded against complete dependence upon commercialised amusement and from many of the evils that are such a menace to young people in their leisure hours.

Children could be encouraged to write and act their own plays. They could make the simple properties necessary for the performance, which could be staged either in or out of doors. For the older as well as the younger children a dressing-up box is invaluable.

Some children would be interested in getting out a magazine, which they could write and illustrate themselves.

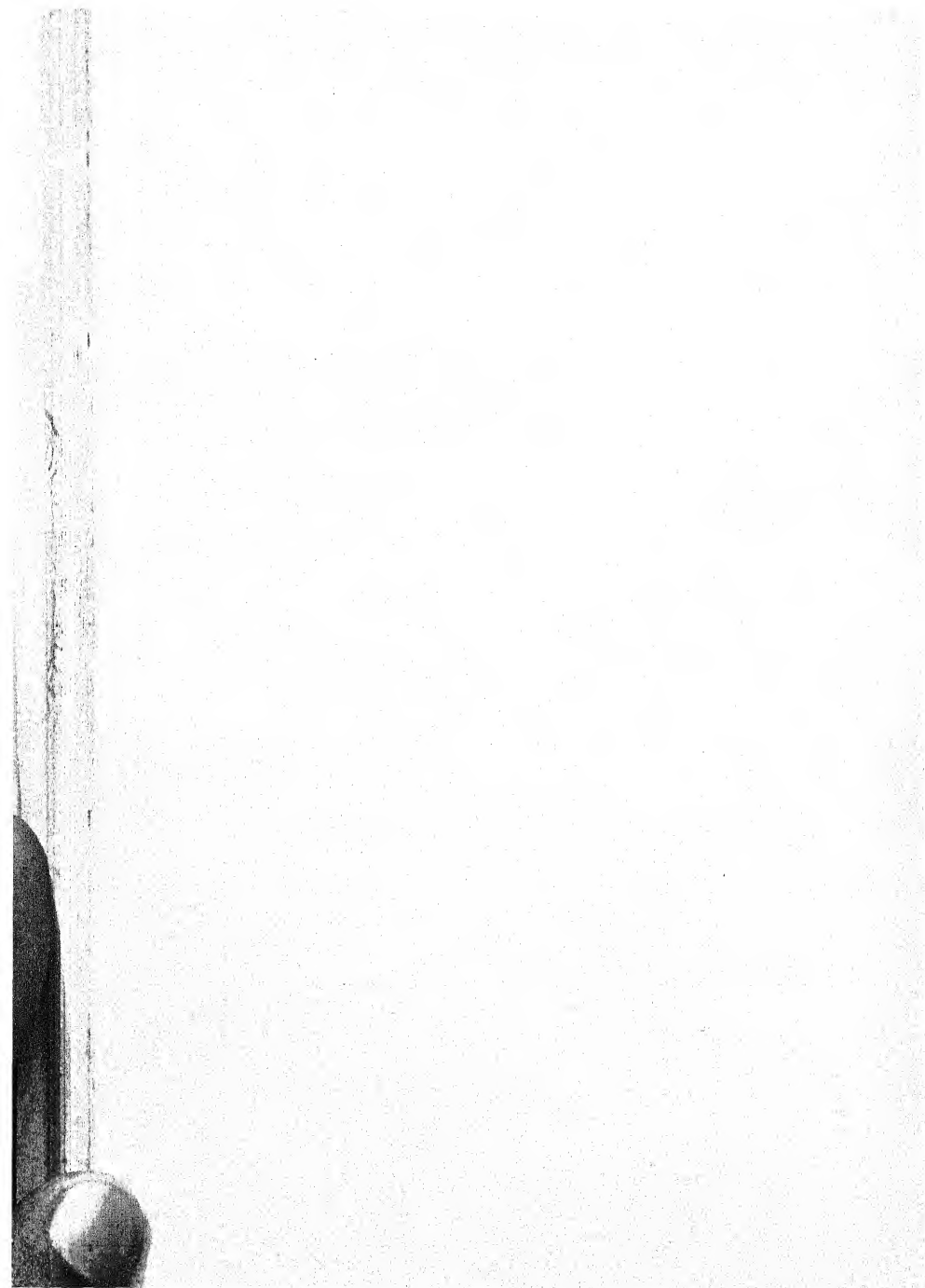
All children should be encouraged to take part in at least one form of sport, so that they do not become spectator sportsmen only, of whom we have too many.

I shall conclude with two quotations. The first is from a speech by General Smuts :

"If I were a dictator I would lay down as a programme of principles for the new education: the building up of individual personality; the encouragement of imagination not of memory; the feeding of the young mind with interests, ideals and the joy of life; the cultivating of the love of truth, a broad outlook and objectiveness; . . . and the principles of Holism—namely that in this Universe we are all members of one another, and that selfishness is the grand refusal and denial of life."

And the second is from a lecture by Salter Davies:

"The business of the teacher is not merely or primarily to pass on to his pupils such knowledge as he happens to possess, but so to quicken their spirit that, during years of work and of leisure, they may be able to live with understanding, with honesty and with delight."



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